

⁵ John Tracy Atkins Vol. 1. A-B
PERIANDER. 712

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

LINCOLN'S-INN FIELDS.

*At Bello audacis Populi, vexatus & Armis,
Finibus Extorris, Complexu avulsus Iuli,
Auxilium imploret videatque indigna suorum
Funera*

Et cedit ante diem mediâque inhumatus arenâ. Virg.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WATTS, at the Printing-Office in
Wild-Court near Lincolns-Inn Fields.

MDCCXXXI.

[Price One Shilling Six-pence.]

EXAMINER

A

RAGGEDY

As it is used in the

EATRE-R-O-YAL

IN

NOON-TIME FILLS



It is now in the hands of the

LOAN OF

for J. W. at the Printing Office
Mid-County Press, London

MIDDOCKHAM

[Printed and Published by]



To His ROYAL HIGHNESS the
P R I N C E.

SIR,



WHEN Poetry lies under so
general a Discouragement,
it is a Presumption to ap-
pear as an Author, unless
under the Protection of
so Illustrious a Name, as Your ROYAL
HIGHNESS's.

Neglected as Plays at present are, a
Love of them will always be esteem'd a
Proof of an Elegant, and Refin'd Under-
standing: And it is a Justice due to Your
ROYAL HIGHNESS's Condescension,
that your frequent Appearance is not
wanting

DEDICATION.

wanting to Establish once more, as Fashionable, a Taste for Entertainments, the only Publick Ones, that carry in them any Instruction,

Where so many Amiable Qualities center, as in Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, it is difficult to forbear the Praises they deserve; yet where so much Delicacy is, I am fearful of giving Your ROYAL HIGHNESS too much Pain, by the Pleasure in which I could indulge my self on such a Theme.

I am,

S I R,

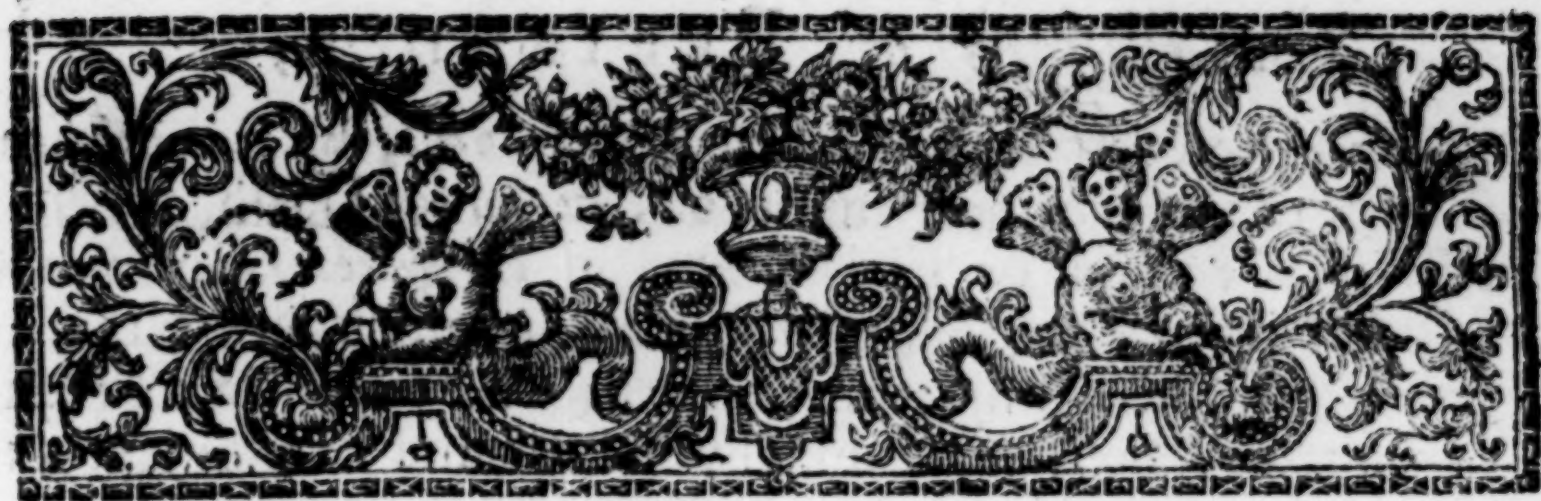
Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's

most Obedient,

most Humble,

and most Devoted Servant,

JOHN TRACY.



THE
HISTORY of *Periander*,
KING of *Corinth*:

Extracted from the most Authentick Greek and
Latin Historians,

And the Chevalier *Ramsay*'s *CYRUS*.

By a Gentleman of *Cambridge*.

PERIANDER was the Son of *Cypselus* the U-
surper of *Corinth*, whom he succeeded in his Do-
minion and Tyranny. He was born in the last
Year of the twenty ninth Olympiad, and reign'd
about forty four Years.

He was at first indeed more mild than his Father,
but afterwards having contracted a strict Friendship with *Thra-*
sybulus, Tyrant of *Miletus*, he became far more cruel. He
sent one to consult that Tyrant how he might manage his Af-
fairs and govern the *Corinthians* with the greatest Security.
Thrasylbulus carry'd the Ambassador out of the City into a Field
of Corn, where he cut down and threw away all the tallest
Blades, 'till he had thereby destroy'd the best and fairest of the
Wheat. When he had done this quite thro' the Field, he dis-
miss'd the Ambassador without any other Message.

At his Return, *Periander* was earnest to know *Thrasylbulus*'s
Answer, but he assur'd him he had receiv'd none, and won-
d'ring that he sent him to such a Madman as destroy'd his own
Goods, he related what Havock he had made in the Corn-field.

Periander presently imagin'd that *Thrasylbulus*, by this Action, advis'd him to put the most eminent Citizens to Death, without Distinction of Friends or Foes : And in *Diogenes Laertius* we find a Letter from *Thrasylbulus* to *Periander* which shews that he was very right in his Conjecture ; therefore he exercis'd all manner of Cruelties in *Corinth*, and by Death and Banishment extirpated those who had escap'd the Fury of his Father.

Some Authors, particularly *Diogenes Laertius*, ascribe the Invention of most Ways whereby Tyranny is establish'd and kept up, to *Periander* : They will have it that he was the first Prince that was attended with arm'd Men for his Guard, of whom *Suidas* says he had three hundred, and that to prevent the *Corinthians* from caballing against him, he forbid them to keep any Servants, invented something every Day to keep them employ'd, and fin'd those whom he saw loytering in the publick Places. He also invented Vessels with three Benches of Oars which he used in both Seas, and attempted to dig the *Isthmus* off from the Continent.

It is justly observ'd by *M. Bayle*, that tho' *Periander* was reckon'd one of the seven wise Men of *Greece*, it had been better to have placed him among the most wicked Men that ever liv'd : For besides his other Acts of Tyranny, he stripp'd the *Corinthian* Women of all their rich Attire, to enable him to make a Golden Statue which he had vow'd to the Gods. He committed Incest with *Cratea* his own Mother, kill'd his Wife *Melissa*, the most beautiful, virtuous, and courageous Princess of her Time ; caus'd his Concubines to be burnt because their Calumnies had exasperated him against her, and disinherited and banish'd his youngest Son *Lycophron*, because he lamented the Death of his Mother. *Laertius* says, that his Wife's true Name was *Lysis*, tho' he call'd her *Melissa* ; and *Athenaeus*, that he first fell in Love with her seeing her in a *Peloponnesian* Dress in her Petticoat without a Gown, giving Drink to her Father's Workmen.

Herodotus tells us, that when he had kill'd his Wife *Melissa*,
 ' He found that Calamity attended by another. She left him
 ' two Sons, one of Seventeen, and another of Eighteen Years
 ' of Age, whom *Procles* sent for to his Court, and caress'd
 ' with great Tenderness. When he dismiss'd them, he said, *Do*
 ' *you know, Children, who kill'd your Mother ? Cypselus* the elder,
 ' made no Reflection on these Words ; but the younger, whose
 ' Name was *Lycophron*, returning to *Corinth* full of Resent-
 ' ment, and detesting the Murtherer of his Mother, disdain'd
 ' either to speak to his Father, or to make any Answer to the
 ' Questions he ask'd ; 'till at last *Periander* in a great Rage
 ' turn'd him out of doors ; and afterwards inquir'd of the elder
 ' Brother, what Discourse they had heard from *Procles*. He
 ' acquainted

acquainted him, That they had been receiv'd by *Procles* in the kindest Manner, not giving the least Hint of the Words he said at their Departure, because they had made no Impression on his Mind. But *Periander* insisting that *Procles* had undoubtedly given him some Instructions, ply'd him with many Questions, that at last the young Man recollected, and repeated the Words to his Father, who laid them so much to Heart, that he resolv'd to treat his Son without the least Indulgence, and forbid the Persons that had given him Reception to harbour him any longer. *Lycophron* being remov'd from this House, retir'd to another; and being expell'd from thence in like manner, by the Menaces and positive Commands of *Periander*, he betook himself to a third, where he was received as the Son of *Periander*, tho' the Persons concern'd were not without Fear of the Father's Displeasure. At last, *Periander*, by an Edict, forbid all Persons, to entertain or converse with him, under Penalty of a certain Fine to be apply'd to the Temple of *Apollo*. Upon this, every Body shunning his Company, he resolv'd to repair to the publick Places, without making any further Tryal of his Friends in such desperate Circumstances.

But on the fourth Day after this Resolution, *Periander* finding him disfigur'd by Want and Necessity, began to relent, and approaching him with Compassion, said, "Son, Had'st thou rather lead this wretched Life, than qualify thy self, by obeying me, for the Enjoyment of all my Power and Riches? Thou who art my Son, and a Prince in the rich City of *Corinth*, hast chose a vagabond Life, by disobeying and exasperating me: For that Misfortune which so much troubles thee sits the heavier at my Heart, because the Fact was perpetrated by my own Hands. Therefore, as I doubt not that thou hast sufficiently learnt, by this time, how much better 'tis to be envy'd than pity'd, and how prejudicial it is to provoke a Parent, and a Man of Power, I give thee Leave to return Home.

To this Admonition *Lycophron* made no other Answer, than that he had incurr'd the Penalty of his own Edict by speaking to him. So that *Periander* perceiving his Son's incurable Obstinacy, sent him by Sea to *Corcyra*, which was a Part of his Dominions; and then made War with *Procles*. *Laertius* mentions an Epistle which *Periander* sent to *Procles*, as follows. "We unwillingly committed that Crime upon *Melissa*; but if you willingly alienate my Son's Affection from me, you do unjustly, therefore, either soften his Mind towards me, or I shall revenge this Injury. I have satisfy'd *Melissa*, by burning the Garments of all the Women of *Corinth*, to her Honour.

iv *The History of PERIANDER,*

‘ At length *Periander* growing old, and perceiving he cou’d
 ‘ no longer attend the Administration of publick Affairs, he
 ‘ sent for *Lycophron* from *Corcyra*, to take the Government
 ‘ upon him, because *Cypselus* his eldest Son was a Fool; but
 ‘ *Lycophron* wou’d not vouchsafe to give the Messenger an Au-
 ‘ dience. Nevertheless *Periander*, still fond of the young Man,
 ‘ sent another Message to him by his own Daughter, *Lycophron’s*
 ‘ Sister, thinking she might prevail with him to return.

‘ At her Arrival she accosted him in these Terms: “ Child,
 “ said she, hadst thou rather see thy Father’s Dominions fall
 “ into the Hands of others, and our Family utterly destroyed,
 “ than return to *Corinth*, and take Possession of all? Come a-
 “ way from this Place, and cease to punish thy self. Obstinacy
 “ is an inauspicious Quality: Think not to cure one Evil by
 “ another. Many have preferr’d Equity before the Rigour of
 “ Justice; and many have lost their Paternal Inheritance by
 “ pursuing a Maternal Claim. A Kingdom is an uncertain Pos-
 “ session, courted by numerous Pretenders. Thy Father is old
 “ and infirm: Let nothing therefore prevail with thee to aban-
 “ don to others the Advantages which belong to thy self.

‘ Thus she press’d him with these Exhortations, as she had
 ‘ been instructed by her Father. But *Lycophron* refusing to com-
 ‘ ply, assur’d her he would never return to *Corinth*, ’till he
 ‘ heard their Father was dead.

‘ With this Answer his Sister departed; and having inform’d
 ‘ the Father of what had passed, he sent a third Message by a
 ‘ Herald to acquaint his Son, that he himself design’d to retire
 ‘ to *Corcyra*; and commanded him to return in order to take
 ‘ immediate Possession of the Government. To this Proposal
 ‘ *Lycophron* consented; and as *Periander* was preparing to re-
 ‘ move to *Corcyra*, and his Son to *Corinth*, the *Corcyreans* in-
 ‘ form’d of the Design, and unwilling to receive *Periander* in-
 ‘ to their Country, put the young Man to Death. To revenge
 ‘ this Murder, *Periander* form’d a villanous Design against the
 ‘ Inhabitants of the Island *Corcyra*; which was, to send their
 ‘ Youths to *Alyattes* King of *Sardis*, to be castrated; but the
 ‘ Ships which carried those innocent Victims putting into *Sa-*
 ‘ mos, the Boys were sav’d from the Misery to which he had
 ‘ destin’d them.

Diogenes Laertius does not specify the Number of those
 Lads, but *Herodotus* says they were no less than three hundred;
 of the best Families in the Island.

The manner of their Preservation is thus recorded by *Hero-*
dotus:

‘ When the *Corinthian* Ships which transported them were
 ‘ drove upon the Island *Samos*, the Inhabitants of that Island
 ‘ knowing for what purpose they were bound to *Sardis*, advis’d
 ‘ the

the Boys to take Sanctuary in the Temple of *Diana*; and forbad the *Corinthians* to use any violent Means to remove them; because they were under the Protection of that Goddess. When the *Corinthians* refus'd to give them Sustainance, the *Samians*, on that Account, instituted a Festival, which they observe to this day: For at Night, while the young Suppliants were in *Diana's* Temple, they assembled the Lads and Lasses of their Island to dance, and gave them certain Cakes to throw to the *Corcyrean* Youth, while they were dancing, for their Support. This Practice they continued till the *Corinthians*, weary of attending, thought fit to depart from *Samos*, leaving the Youths, whom the *Samians* sent home to *Corcyra*.

In order to make the History of *Periander* as compleat as possible, we shall add the following Account from the *Travels* of *Cyrus*.

Periander's Father, *Cypselus*, after having reign'd above thirty Years, and fatiated his Passions, began to be troubled with Remorse, reflected with Horror upon his Usurpation, and resolv'd to free the *Corinthians* from their Slavery; but Death prevented him. A little before he expir'd, he call'd his Son *Periander* to him, and made him swear to restore his Countrymen to their Liberty: But the young Prince, blinded by his Ambition, quickly forgot his Oath; and this was the Source of all his Misfortunes.

The *Corinthians* sought to destroy him, and rose in Arms against him several times; but he subdued the Rebels, and strengthen'd his Authority more and more, particularly by his Marriage with *Melissa* the Heiress of *Arcadia*.

Several Years after that Marriage, *Periander* declared War against the *Corcyreans*, and put himself at the Head of his Troops. The *Corinthians* revolting again in his Absence, *Melissa* shut herself up in the Fortrefs, vigorously sustain'd the Siege of it, and sent to demand Succour of *Procles*, King of *Epidaurus*, who had always seem'd a faithful Friend to *Periander*.

But *Procles*, who had long form'd a Project of extending his Dominion over all *Greece*, took Advantage of this Juncture to seize *Corinth*, which he consider'd as a City very proper to be the Capital of a great Empire, and therefore came before it with a numerous Army, and took it in a few Days.

Melissa, who was ignorant of his Designs, open'd the Gates of the Fortrefs, and receiv'd him as her Deliverer, and the Friend of her Husband.

Procles being Master of *Corinth*, fix'd his Residence there, and gave *Periander* to understand that he must content himself with reigning at *Corcyra*, which that Prince had just conquer'd.

Melissa

Melissa quickly found that Usurpation was not the only Crime of which *Procles* was capable. He had entertain'd a violent Passion for her, and he try'd all Means to satisfy it. After having in vain employ'd both Carelles and Menaces, he inhumanly caus'd her to be shut up with her Son *Lycophron* in a high Tower, situate upon the Borders of the Sea.

In the mean while, *Periander* was inform'd of *Procles*'s Treachery, and of his Love for *Melissa*. He was at the same time assur'd, that she had not only favour'd the Tyrant's perfidious Designs, but answer'd his Passion.

The King of *Corinth* listen'd too easily to these Calumnies. Jealousy took Possession of his Heart, and he yielded himself up to its Fury. He equipped a great Fleet and embark'd for *Corinth*, before *Procles* cou'd put himself in a Posture of Defence. He was just entring the Port, when a violent Storm rose and dispersed his Ships. *Melissa*, who knew not *Periander*'s Sentiments, was actually blessing the Gods for her approaching Deliverance, when she saw part of the Fleet perish before her Eyes. The rest, being driven on the Coast of *Africa*, were there cast away, but that Vessel only in which *Periander* was, escap'd the Fury of the Tempest.

He return'd to *Corcyra*, where he fell into a deep Melancholy. He had Courage enough to bear up under the Loss of his Dominions, but he cou'd not support the Thoughts of *Melissa*'s imagin'd Crime. Her he had lov'd, and her only; but such was the Weight of his Grief, that it almost distracted him.

Mean while *Melissa*, who was still shut up in the Tower, thought *Periander* was dead, and wept for him bitterly. She saw herself expos'd afresh to the Insults of a barbarous Prince, who had no Horror at committing even the greatest Crimes. While she was imploring the Help of the Gods, and conjuring them to protect her Innocence, the Person under whose Charge *Procles* had left her, being touch'd with her Misfortunes, enter'd the Prison, inform'd her that *Periander* was living, and offer'd to conduct her with her Son to *Corcyra*. They all three escap'd by a subterraneous Passage, travell'd all Night thro' By-ways, and in a few Days got out of the Territory of *Corinth*; but they wander'd long upon the Coast of the *Ægean* Sea, before they cou'd pass over to *Corcyra*.

Procles, mad with Rage and Despair at the Escape of the Queen, contriv'd Means to confirm *Periander* in his Suspensions, and to give him Notice that *Melissa* wou'd very soon arrive in the Island of *Corcyra*, in order to poyson him. The unfortunate King of *Corinth* listen'd with Greediness to every Thing that might inflame his Jealousy, and redouble his Fury.

In the mean while, *Melissa* and *Lycophron* arrived with their Guide at *Corcyra*, and hasten'd to see *Periander*: He was not

in his Palace, but in a gloomy Forest, to which he often retir'd to indulge his Grief. As soon as he sees *Melissa* at a great Distance, Jealousy and Fury seize his Mind. He runs towards her, she stretches out her Arms to receive him; but as soon as he comes near her, he draws his Dagger, and plunges it into her Bosom. She falls with these Words, *Ab! Periander! is it so that you reward my Love and Fidelity?* She wou'd have proceeded, but Death put an End to all her Misfortunes; and her Soul flew away to the *Elysian* Fields, there to receive the Recompence of her Virtue.

Lycophron sees his Mother swimming in her Blood, melts into Tears, and cries out, *Revenge, just Gods, Revenge the Death of an innocent Mother upon a barbarous Father, whom Nature has forbid me to punish!* This said, he ran into the Wood, and wou'd never see his Father more. The faithful *Corinthian* who had accompany'd him to *Corcyra*, let *Periander* then know the Innocence and Fidelity of *Melissa*, and all the Miseries which *Procles* had made her suffer in her Imprisonment.

The wretched King perceiv'd his Credulity too late; gave way to his Despair, and stabb'd himself with the same Poignard; but the Stroke was not mortal. He was going to lift up his Arm a second Time, but was with-held. He threw himself upon the Body of *Melissa*, and often repeated these Words: *Great Jupiter! complete by thy Thunderbolt the Punishment which Men hinder me from finishing! Ab Melissa! Melissa! ought the tenderest Love to have concluded thus, with the most barbarous Cruelty!*

As he utter'd these Words, he endeavour'd to tear open his Wound, but was hinder'd, and conducted to his Palace. He continu'd to refuse all Consolation, and reproach'd his Friends with Cruelty, for seeking to preserve a Life which he abhor'd.

There was no Way to calm his Mind, but by representing to him, that he alone cou'd punish the Crimes of *Procles*. This Hope quieted him, and he suffer'd himself to be cur'd.

As soon as his Health was restored, he went among all his Allies, representing his Disgraces and Affronts. The *Thebans* lent him Troops. He besieged *Corinth*, took *Procles* Prisoner, and sacrific'd him upon *Melissa's* Tomb.

But *Lycophron* remain'd still at *Corcyra*, and refus'd to return to *Corinth*, that he might not see a Father who had murder'd a virtuous Mother, whom he tenderly lov'd.

Periander dragg'd on the rest of his unhappy Life, without enjoying his Grandeur. He had stabb'd a Wife whom he ador'd. He lov'd a Son who justly hated him. At length, he resolv'd to lay down his Royalty, crown his Son, and retire into the Island of *Corcyra*, there for ever to lament his Misfortunes, and expiate the Crimes he had committed. Pursuant to this Design,

he

he order'd a Vessel to *Corcyra* to fetch *Lycophron* Home, instructing the Messenger to perswade him to return to *Corinth*, by telling him that his Father wou'd set him on the Throne. He flatter'd himself that he shou'd pacify the Prince's Hatred by this Sacrifice, and was already preparing to place the Diadem on his Head. He was impatient for his Arrival, and often went to the Sea-side. The Ship at length appear'd: *Periander* ran with Eagerness to embrace his only Son; but how great was his Surprise and Grief, when he beheld *Lycophron* in a Coffin!

The *Corcyreans* groaning under the Yoke of *Periander*, whose Cruelties they abhorr'd, had revolted; and to extinguish for ever the Tyrant's Race, the Son was made the innocent Victim of their Enmity against the Father. These barbarous Islanders assassinated the young Prince, and sent the dead Body in the Vessel, as a Testimony of their eternal Hatred.

Periander struck with this sad Spectacle, enters deeply into himself, discovers the Wrath of Heaven, and cries out, *I have violated the Oath made to a dying Father. I have refused to restore Liberty to my Countrymen. O Melissa! O Lycophron! O vengeful Gods! I have but too well deserv'd all these Calamities which overwhelm me!* He then appointed a pompous Funeral, and commanded all the People to be present at it.

At the Head of the Procession march'd several Players upon Flutes, who increas'd the publick Sorrow by their plaintive Sounds. A Company of young Girls bare-footed, their Hair dishevell'd, and cloath'd in white long Robes, surrounded the Bier, and melted into Tears, when they sang the Praises of the Dead. A little after, follow'd the Soldiers with a slow Pace, a sorrowful Air, their Pikes revers'd, and their Eyes upon the Ground. At their Head march'd *Periander*, a venerable old Man, with a noble and military Air, a tall and majestick Stature, and bitter Grief painted on his Face. When they came to the Fortress, which was the Burial Place of the Kings, *Periander*, first of all, pour'd Wine, Milk and Honey upon the Body of his Son. He then with his own Hands lighted the Funeral Pile, upon which had been strew'd Incense, Aromatic Spices, and sweet Odors. He remain'd mute, immoveable, and with his Eyes drown'd in Tears, while the devouring Flames consum'd the Body. After having sprinkled the yet smoaking Ashes with perfum'd Liquors, he gather'd them together into a golden Urn; and then making a Sign to the People that he was going to speak, he thus broke Silence. ' *People of Corinth, the Gods themselves have taken Care to revenge you of my Usurpation, and to deliver you from Slavery. Lycophron is dead, my whole Race is extinct, and I will reign no longer. Countrymen, resume your Rights and Liberties.*'

As soon as he had said these Words, he order'd all the Assembly to retire, cut off his Hair to denote his Sorrow, and shut himself up in the Tomb with his Son.

Cyrus, who was present at *Lycophron's* Funeral Obsequies, understood some Days after, that *Periander* had ordered two Slaves to go by Night to a certain Place, and kill the first Man they should meet, and then throw his Body into the Sea. The King went thither himself, was murder'd, and his Body never found, to receive the Honours of Burial. Having given himself over to a Despair beyond Example, he resolv'd to punish himself in this Manner, that his Shade might continually wander upon the Banks of *Styx*, and never enter the Abode of Heroes.

Laertius says, that he dy'd of excessive Melancholy in the last Year of the 48th Olympiad, and the 80th of his Age, and that being desirous none should know where he was bury'd, he thus contriv'd it. He commanded two Men to go to a certain Place at Night, and to kill the first Man they met with, and bury him: After them he sent four to kill and bury the two; after the four, more: They obey'd his Order, and the two first kill'd *Periander*.

The *Corinthians* erected an empty Monument for him with this Inscription,

" *Periander* lies within *Carinthian* Ground,

" For Power and Wisdom above all renown'd.

Laertius has this Epigram upon him; which *Stanley* has translated in the following manner;

" At whatsoe'er shall happen be not sad,

" Alike for all the Gods dispense be glad.

" Wise *Periander* did through Grief expire,

" Because Things did not answer his Desire.

What a dreadful Series of Crimes and Misfortunes is the Reader here presented with, and with what a manifest Proof of the Disorder into which false Religions throw the Minds of Men, instead of correcting their vicious Inclinations!

We see a Tyrant believing in the Gods, yet daring to pollute himself with Incest and Murders. We see him making a Vow of a golden Statue to the Gods, and fulfilling it with a most unjust Robbery, a Violence which next to that done to their Honour, is the most grating to the Sex on which it was committed.—What a flaming Instance is here of the vindictive Justice of Heaven, in extinguishing the Tyrant's whole Family! The Husband stabs his Wife, rebellious Subjects assassinate the innocent Son, and the King procures his own Murder.

Perian-

Periander, says *Plutarch*, being become a Tyrant by an hereditary Disease deriv'd to him by his Father, endeavour'd to purge himself of it as much as possible, by a Conversation with Men who were celebrated for their Wisdom. To this Purpose he sent an Epistle to the Sages of *Greece*, when they met at *Delphi*, inviting them to come to his House at *Corinth*.

They came to him accordingly, and he was associated in the Number of the Wise Men, who, says *Plutarch*, were originally no more than five; but that afterwards, *Cleobulus*, Tyrant of *Lindus*, and *Periander*, Tyrant of *Corinth*, who had neither Virtue nor Wisdom, yet by the Greatness of their Power, and Multitude of their Friends, and the Obligations they conferr'd upon their Adherents, forc'd a Reputation, and thrust themselves violently into the Number of the Wise Men. To this End they also spread abroad Sentences and remarkable Sayings throughout all *Greece*, the very same which others had said before, who were therefore much displeas'd, yet wou'd not expose their Vanity, nor publicly dispute that Title with Persons of so much Wealth and Power; but meeting together at *Delphi*, after some private Debate, they consecrated *E*, the fifth Letter in the Alphabet, to testify to the God of that Temple that they were no more than Five, and that they rejected and excluded the Sixth and Seventh. *Laertius* says *Periander* wrote 2000 Verses of Moral Instructions, so that the Attribute of *Wise* appears to have been conferr'd on him, not in respect to his Actions, but his Sentences, of which there are many recorded in *Plutarch*, *Ausonius* and *Laertius*.





P R O L O G U E.

By a FRIEND. Spoken by Mr. RYAN.

WHEN Precepts fail'd to move an impious Age,
And Threatnings but provok'd th' Offender's Rage,
When the few Wise who taught, or warn'd Mankind,
The fruitless, good, unwelcome Task resign'd,
The Muse resentful, arm'd in Virtue's Cause,
And brought Example to enforce her Laws,
The Good, and Bad, from dark Oblivion drew,
And gave the living Lessons to our View,
The Slave and Tyrant shew'd, degenerate Race!
Equal in Guilt, and equal in Disgrace,
But taught the truly Great, who Praise declin'd,
Where Merit hides, Reward at length will find;
Fix'd as they seem, at one surprising Turn,
The Wretch may triumph, and the Haughty mourn.

From the sad Tale our Author now prepares,
Too fatally this dreadful Truth appears;
At first the false imperfect Scene delights,
Successful Robber of a People's Rights!
See him by Crouds ador'd, of Pow'r possess'd,
Nay more, in virtuous Love sincerely blest!
Wait one short Moment, and the Blaze is done,
And Horror closes what in Guilt begun.

See the false Flatt'rer mask'd in Friendship's Name,
While blackest Mischiefs are his only Aim,
This Fiend can make you for a Tyrant weep,
And wonder Hell it self can wound so deep.

With Patience and with Candour now attend,
Let each display the Critick, and the Friend,
Our Author's faint Attempt your Hearts to move,
By your Attention, and your Smiles approve.

Drama-

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Periander, <i>King of Corinth,</i>	Mr. <i>Quin.</i>
Lycophron, <i>His Son,</i>	Mr. <i>Clarke.</i>
Procles, <i>King of Epidaurus,</i>	Mr. <i>Ryan.</i>
Aristides, <i>Friend to Periander,</i>	Mr. <i>Milward.</i>
Zeno, { <i>Two of the greatest Men</i>	} Mr. <i>Hulet.</i>
Alcander, { <i>in Corinth, Conspiring to</i>	
Hypsenor, <i>A pretended Friend</i>	} Mr. <i>Walker.</i>
<i>of Periander's, but a Crea-</i>	
<i>ture of Procles.</i>	
Lycon, <i>Governor of the Tower,</i>	Mr. <i>Ogden.</i>
<i>The General of the Thebans,</i>	Mr. <i>Haughton.</i>

W O M E N.

Melissa, <i>Queen of Corinth,</i>	Mrs. Buchanan.
Clarinda, <i>Her Confident,</i>	Mrs. Templar.

Guards, &c.

S C E N E C O R I N T H.

PERI-



PERIANDER.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Zeno's House.

Enter Zeno, to him Alcander.

ZENO.



WELCOME, my worthy Friend;
my Soul has pin'd,
And mourn'd in secret for the Want
of thee;
By Heav'n, I find, I am but half
my self,

When thou, my better Part, art absent from me:
For I, like Lovers, with Impatience wait,
Each Moment think an Age 'till you return.

Alc. Friendship, thou greatest Happiness below!
The World wou'd be a Desert, but for thee;
And Man himself, a nobler sort of Brute:
Wherefore did Heav'n our God-like Reason give?
To make the Charms of Conversation sweet;

B

To

To open and unbosom all our Woes:
 For Life's sure Med'cine is a faithful Friend.
 I wou'd (but 'tis not in the Pow'r of Words)
 Express with how much Warmth I love my *Zeno*.

Zen. But hold! no more! too precious is the Time!
 Our Lives and future Fortunes are at Stake,
 And all depends on this Important Hour:
 The King will shortly with his Army march
 To fight the *Corcyreans*; Gallant Men!
 That dare to stand against a Tyrant's Pow'r;
 Now resolutely fixt to pay no more
 A Tax, that brands 'em with the Name of Slaves;
 But rather chuse the lighter Ills of War,
 Than tamely yield their Fortunes, and their Lives,
 To the disposal of a Tyrant's Hand.
 O City! worthy of a better Fate!
 You first inspir'd my Soul with generous Thoughts!
 Oh *Corinth*! oh my too much injur'd Country!
 I cou'd in Tears of Blood lament for thee.

Alc. How art thou sunk from all thy former Glory!
 This is the Fruit of *Corinth*'s Luxury,
 That Nurse of Tyranny! that Bane of Virtue!
 Where-e'er th' insinuating Poison spreads,
 Our Sense it weakens, sinks us into Brutes,
 It plunges us in Sloth, in Poverty,
 In Guilt, Corruption, Slavery and Ruin.

Zen. Can it be just, that One should reign alone,
 And lord it uncontroll'd o'er thousand Slaves?
 Can it be just, a Creature, such as this,
 A Man of Passion, and of Frailties made,
 Shou'd to another nobler than himself

Say, Not

Say, Wretch, it is my Pleasure you shou'd dye?

Alc. Who has not heard how in one dreadful Day,
The Tyrant shed the noblest Blood in *Corinth*?
Too fatally he knew what *Thrasibulus*,
Infernal Wretch! meant by his cruel Emblem;
For when he cropt the tall aspiring Flow'rs,
He spoke too plain, that our aspiring Youth
Shou'd in their Bloom be cropt: the Tale is told!
And Heads of Men that were their Country's Glory,
With Rage implacable were strait lopt off;
And we, alas! we are the poor Remains,
Reserv'd perhaps to grace some other Scaffold.

Zen. Know that my eager Soul is all on fire,
I burn to set my suff'ring Country free,
And give the ancient Liberty to *Corinth*.

Alc. Hear then the Progress that my Zeal has made.
I have long since a faithful Friend employ'd,
That he might sound the Temper of the People.
He tells me that some ancient Spark remains
Of their Forefathers' Love for Liberty;
And that their abject State, and numerous Wrongs,
At length have kindl'd in their Souls a Flame,
That shall inspire the Slaves to noble Acts,
Shall rouse 'em from their Lethargy to Life,
And make 'em vindicate the Cause of Nature;
For 'twas with Freedom to this World we came,
But poorly we submitted to be Slaves.

Zen. Be speedy then, nor suffer 'em to cool:
For what's so fickle as the People's Breath?
Now hot, now cold, and all as Chance directs.
Say, Not more Inconstant is the Breath of Air,

That blows one Moment, and the next is calm.
 For fear their languid Resolutions faint,
 We'll tell 'em, that the noblest Sons of *Corinth*
 Will head 'em instantly, and lead 'em on,
 To Life, to Glory, and to Liberty.

Alc. The Crowds shall bless us as we pass along,
 And with one general Acclamation, cry,
 Behold the great Restorers of our Liberty!
 Our Names shall reach beyond Mortality,
 And be a Pattern for each Age to come. [Exeunt.]



S C E N E *The Palace.*

Enter Periander, with Attendants, at one Door; the
 Queen, Clarinda, and her Train, at another.

Per. Oh my *Melissa*! Charmer of my Soul!
 Believe, what now by ev'ry God I swear,
 That from thy Presence I shall always feel
 Such Transports, such Emotions in my Breast,
 As when these Eyes first on thy Beauties gaz'd.
 To the parcht Earth not warm refreshing Show'rs,
 To Northern Climes the Sun's enliv'ning Beams,
 Or golden Fields of Corn, to wishing Swains,
 Can half that Joy, that Satisfaction give,
 As when the lovely fair *Melissa* comes
 To glad, to cheer her *Periander's* Soul.

Queen. By the same awful Pow'rs of Heav'n I swear
 That the first time my Eyes were blest with thine,
 I found a yielding Softness in my Heart.

Ev'n all the Pomp and Splendors of a Court,
All the vast Wealth that Eastern Monarchs boast,
Wou'd look with fading Lustre in my Eyes,
If shar'd with any other Man but thee.

Per. My Country calls aloud for my Revenge,
Bids me redress the Wrongs *Corcyra* gives,
I shou'd be poorly wanting to my Fame,
If I their Insolence shou'd tamely bear :
You must support my Absence for a while ;
But oh, believe, what, from my Heart I speak,
Not Mothers, when their Infants from their Arms
By the rude Soldiers cruel Hands are torn,
Feel half those bitter Agonies of Woe,
As at this Moment strike me to the Soul.

Queen. Oh, oh, the Torture of that Word, Farewel !
Oh my foreboding Soul ! too much I fear,
That after all our Flow of Happiness,
A Scene of Woe will in its Place succeed,
Nor Joy upon our future Meetings smile.
Alas, when you are absent from my Sight,
Soon will each pleasing Object lose its Charms ;
The Sun will not with half that Lustre shine ;
The Flow'rs, that look with so much Beauty now,
That laugh at ev'ry vain Attempt of Art,
As various as the Rainbow in their Colours,
When you are absent, all their Sweets will fade,
Look dull, of ev'ry former Charm bereft ;
And droop, and hang their Heads, 'till you return.

Per. Oh my *Melissa* ! leave these gloomy Thoughts !
Let Beams of Joy reflect upon your Mind.
Th' Idea of your Face will give my Sword

A double Edge, will teach my Foes to know,
 What 'tis to tear me from thy fond Embrace:
 Believe me, with a Lover's Haste I'll fly
 To meet my Queen, the Idol of my Soul.

Queen. To Heav'n, each Morn, I'll make my con-
 stant Pray'r,
 That Guards Cœlestial may thy Life defend,
 And safe restore thee to my longing Arms.
 With Transport shall I view my *Lycophron*,
 The true, and pleasing Image of his Father:
 May the propitious Deities above
 Make him the Heir of all thy Virtues too.

Per. Oh thou compleatest Pattern of thy Kind!
 Beauties thy Face, and Virtues grace thy Mind.
 In Wisdom, like *Minerva*, sprung from *Jove*;
 In Beauty, like the *Paphian* Queen of Love.
 When thou wer't form'd by the Almighty Hand,
 On Earth he plac'd thee with this great Command,
 Go, teach the World, what thou canst prove alone,
 Beauty and Virtue may be joyn'd in one.

[*Drums and Trumpets without.*

But hark! those Martial Sounds summon me forth;
 The Iron Hand of War, that Enemy
 To Love, and all its soft Endearments, parts us. [*Exit.*

[*The Queen and Clarinda remain.*

Queen. My Mind's oppress'd with dark and gloomy
 Thoughts,
 And not one gladsome Ray of Light remains;
 'Till now, each different Morn brought different
 Scenes
 Of Joy, but on the Precipice of Fate

P E R I A N D E R.

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I stand, and my next Step perhaps is Ruin.

Clar. Oh grieve not at imaginary Ills:
Why shou'd you thus forestall your Misery?
Unhappy but a Moment ere your time.

Queen. I strive, but like a Child, that weakly tries
To keep the nauseous Med'cine off; Force soon
The feeble Infant overcomes, and he's
Compell'd to take the bitter Potion down:
So do I, fruitless, strive to ward the Blow;
For human Life is chequer'd at the best,
And Joy and Grief alternately preside,
The good and evil *Dæmon* of Mankind.

Clar. Why shou'd you think that you are left by
Heav'n?

No, with paternal Care the Gods will guard,
And keep each Danger from the Man you love.

Queen. How have you form'd us, ye Immortal
Pow'rs!

What is this Ray of your Divinity,
That faintly glimmers thro' our Earthly Frame,
And seems endu'd with more than natural Pow'r,
To give us Warning of succeeding Ills?

Clar. Think what a Round of Bliss you have enjoy'd:
How *Periander*, fixt his Soul, intent
On pleasing you, each Thought, each Word, each
Look,

Confess'd, that you without a Rival reign'd,
The only darling Idol of his Heart.
Think thus, and be unhappy if you can.

B 4

Enter

Enter Messenger.

Mess. Each Moment is too precious to be lost:
The rude tumultuous Crowd are now in Arms,
Both *Zeno* and *Alcander* at their Head;
They press with Fury to your Palace Walls.
Ruin their Threat, Slaughter and Death the Word.
[*Exit.*

Queen. Alas! the gather'd Clouds are burst already,
And Desolation instant is at hand.
At once the swelling Deluge pours upon us,
With all its Horrors, doubl'd by Surprise,
And Hope is lost, ere Counsel can prevail.
Is there no Means, no Chance of Safety left?

Clar. There is, alas! but one Expedient now.
With Expedition to your Fort repair,
The Mad rebellious Rout shall strive in vain;
As soon the Waves may beat against a Rock,
And make a Passage thro' its solid Mass.

Queen. What are my Crimes, ye Gods, that I'm
thus left

At once a Wretch abandon'd, and forlorn,
And not one Friend to prop my sinking Fortune?
Hypsenor might have serv'd me, but he's absent
On some important Embassy to *Procles*:
Yet were he here, he's such a Sycophant,
That I shou'd think him but a frail Support.
His Words are tinctur'd strong with Flattery,
And 'twas his artful, sly, deceitful Tongue,
Gain'd him a Place in *Periander's* Love.

Clar. There is a Man of open Soul, that scorns

The

P E R I A N D E R.

The little low Devices of a Court;
Nor when he sees the Errors of his Prince,
Can meanly hide the Dictates of his Heart,
And give a real Fault the name of Virtue.

Queen. This must be *Aristides*; none but He
Deserves that perfect Character of Friend, and
Him I wou'd trust; nor wou'd he wrong that Trust;
But tho' he cou'd stand up 'twixt me and Ruin,
Yet still it were unjust to wish him here,
For he is now the Bulwark of his Lord,
The Guide that leads my *Periander* safe
Thro' all the Dangers that attend on War.

Clar. Then to the Fortress for your Refuge fly.
O be not thus Irresolute, but haste,
And save yourself, before Destruction comes.

Queen. Thither this Instant let us both retire,
And shew this giddy Rout, so prone to Change,
What Resolution in our Sex can do,
When for a King and Husband both we fight.

[*Exeunt.*]



S C E N E *The Street.*

Enter Zeno and Alcander with their Forces.

Zen. Friends! *Grecians!* Countrymen!
Behold, the long-expected Hour is come;
The Deities have heard the Pray'rs of *Corinth*,
And the hard Bondage, that you bore so long,

Like

Like Men, you seem resolv'd to throw it off,
 The Champions for your Country's Liberty!
 'Tis not for Foreign Conquest that we fight,
 To make a Nation wretched as our selves:
 We wear a nobler Cause upon our Swords;
 Our All at Stake on this decisive Day.
 Exert your selves like Men of freeborn Souls,
 That all Posterity may bless your Names,
 And latest Times the Benefit may taste.

Alc. Where is the Man among this numerous
 Crowd,

But finds his Heart prepar'd, his Mind resolv'd,
 To conquer in this Cause, or bravely dye?
 If Heav'n permit our Country still to groan
 Beneath the slavish Yoke of Tyranny,
 If we shou'd fail, then I am fixt on Death;
 My Country quite engrosses all my Soul,
 And in my Thoughts Life is a mean Concern.

Zen. If we succeed, think what it is we gain;
 'Tis Liberty! — Is there a Soul among you,
 That bounds not at its Call! But come, my Friends,
 Come, will you follow where your Chiefs shall lead?
 Let us this Instant march, and seize the Fort,
 Surpriz'd and unprovided take the Queen.
 Then *Corinth* freed, and rescu'd by our Hands,
 Shall in her former Fame and Splendor shine;
 And be the dreaded Arbiter of *Greece*.
 Are you prepar'd to fight in such a Cause?

Cit. Yes, *Zeno*, yes; you may our Swords
 command;

Firm and resolv'd for Liberty, we stand.

Alc.

PERIANDE R.

II

Alc. Let this then warm each Breast, and fire
each Thought;
Tho' thro' the Paths of Death the Prize is sought,
A Prize like this can ne'er be dearly bought.

We, like our *Grecian* Ancestors of old,
Will in our glorious Course unwearied hold.
Tho' ten long Years our great Design retard,
Freedom at last will be a full Reward.

The End of the First Act.



ACT



PERIANDER.

ACT II. SCENE I.

*Alcander and Zeno, with their Party,
besieging the Fort.*

ZENO.

GO to the Queen, and tell her, that in vain
She hopes Relief, for Heav'n and Fate are
ours,
Yet in Compassion to her weaker Sex,
We'll see her safe conducted out of *Corinth*:
But if she thinks an obstinate Defence
Her only Safety from approaching Fate,
Then tell her, not her Sex's Privilege
Shall screen her from the Justice of our Swords.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. Arm, arm, my Lord; the Town will be surpriz'd.

The

The *Epidaurians* march in dread Array;
Procles himself the numerous Army leads.

Alc. Oh curst Event! disastrous turn of Fortune!
 We fight not with domestick Foes alone,
 But with a King whose Pow'r so wide extends,
 It's far superior to each *Grecian* State:
 And oh! forgive the melancholly Thought,
 The Cloud that darkens ev'ry Glimpse of Hope!
 If Heav'n shou'd suffer *Procles* to prevail,
 Our former Slavery wou'd lose its Name,
 And we shou'd think it Freedom, when compar'd
 With his Tyrannick, Arbitrary Sway. [Exeunt.



S C E N E A Tent.

Enter Procles and Hypsenor.

Pro. At length, my Friend, the glorious Time is
 come,

And Fortune seems to favour our Design,
 To be the Lord of universal *Greece*:
Corinth, with Factions and Divisions torn,
 Will voluntary yield to any Terms
 My conquering Sword thinks proper to impose.

Hyp. If you with feign'd Pretences can disguise,
 And with false Colours varnish your Design,
 The credulous Fools are easily deceiv'd;
 For *Zeno* and *Alcander* both adore
 That airy Form, that Idol Thing call'd Honour:
 They think each Man as honest as themselves;

For

For from their Lips flows not a single Word,
But what proceeds immediate from the Heart.

Pro. Nature, indulgent to her wiser Kind,
Creates such Fools on purpose for our Prey.
And we, with our superior Talents born,
Made stronger by th' Endowments of the Mind,
By natural Right preside o'er all the rest;
And as we please, they either live or dye.

Hyp. The Crown of *Corinth* is a glorious Step,
A happy, prosperous Omen to the rest:
For Heav'n, that's said, never to act in vain,
Cou'd not your large Capacity, your Soul,
Vast and extensive, form without Design,
But with a Genius tow'ring o'er the rest,
Bid you go forth, the Lord of all below.

Pro. Right, my *Hypsenor*; can it be suppos'd,
A Soul that grasps at all this Globe of Earth,
Will poorly be confin'd to one small Spot,
Nor leap its narrow Bounds, and walk at large?
Yes, as a Fire, that rages o'er a Field,
And by degrees each Blade of Corn destroys,
Nothing appearing but continu'd Waste,
In one bright Flame at last collected burns:
So shall my Arm spread Conquest as it goes;
State after State shall shrink beneath its Force,
'Till all in one promiscuous Ruin lies,
And I exult triumphant o'er the Whole.

Hyp. But hark! the martial Trumpet's sprightly
Sound
Speaks some approaching Message from the Foe;
And see! their Chiefs, follow'd by Multitudes,
Are

Are come to make Proposals from the Town;
Bearing the Olive, as the Sign of Peace:
Now let each soft insinuating Art
Gild o'er our specious Tale, deceive the Fools,
With smooth Pretence win on their easy Faith,
And make 'em think their Liberty your Care.

Pro. Where's the Reward that's equal to thy Merit?
My constant Guide, that points the way to Glory.
We'll now with proper Pomp this Embassy
Receive, to shew our great Regard for *Corinth*.

Enter Zeno, and Alcander.

Zen. To you, O *Procles*, King of *Epidaurus*,
Th' Embassadors of *Corinth* are we come:
Say for what Reason you besiege our Walls;
When we have shaken off th' ignoble Yoke,
Will you reduce us to our former State,
Or to a worse, a Tyrant's keen Revenge?

Pro. To free your Country from its various Ills,
To fix its former Liberty, I come.
I come to shew you what a King shou'd be,
The Guardian, not th' Invader of your Laws.

Alc. If you will swear by ev'ry awful Pow'r,
You will our ancient Liberty restore,
You shall be then receiv'd within our Walls;
Not as the Foe, but as the Friend to *Corinth*:
But if you harbour any base Design,
Of making us again a Tyrant's Slaves,
Know, to the last, we will defend our selves,
And smiling in the Agonies of Death,
Be pleas'd with falling in the glorious Cause.

Pro.

Pro. I promise on the Honour of a King,
That all your Laws shall be inviolate,
And you shall feel the pleasing Change with Joy.
Let haughty *Periander* now give Place,
Procles shall rule you with a milder Sway. [Exit.

Zen. These are, I fear, but airy Promises;
Yet we're reduc'd to such a wretched State,
That we must lean upon this broken Reed;
And, like a Man, that has the fatal Choice,
Of perishing by meagre Famine's Pow'r,
Or be the Victim of remorseless Swords,
Death the sure Consequence of either Choice;
So we have nothing left us now to chuse
But to obey again our former Lord,
Or try our Fortune in a second King:
'Tis *Procles*' stronger Genius now prevails,
And *Corinth* has this only Comfort left,
He can be but a Tyrant at the worst. [Exeunt.



S C E N E III.

Enter Queen, and Clarinda.

Queen. At length the Gods have heard their Suppliant's Pray'r,
Have sent the generous *Procles* to my Aid:
On Wings of Friendship to my Help he came,
And sav'd me on the Borders of Destruction.
Come, let us go, and our Deliv'rer give
The little Thanks *Melissa* can bestow.

Clar.

Clar. Our late Misfortunes are indeed blown off;
But shou'd what general Fame reports, be true,
That *Procles*, blinded by the Thirst of Pow'r,
Forgets that *Periander* is his Friend,
And turn the vile Usurper of his Throne!

Queen. Can Man be guilty of such base Designs?
Can the Desire of Pow'r, the Love of Gold,
Make Mortals throw off their Humanity?
Make Friendship but a weak, a slender Thread,
Make Justice and the Pleas of Virtue light?
Oh my *Clarinda*! Fortune's still our Foe,
Has a much rougher Game than this to play!
Our Joy, swift as some rapid Meteor flies,
That seems to shine, but soon the Flame expires,
And all its Brightness in a moment dies.

Clar. The Clouds, 'tis true, were scatter'd for a
while,
And for a while our Sun with Lustre shone,
A gay Delusion! but a Dream of Joy!
Too like the flatt'ring Scene of *April* Days,
That for a Moment wear a pleasing Face;
In thicker Darkness soon the Heav'ns are vail'd,
And a worse Tempest to the first succeeds.

Queen. *Procles* shall never be unjustly blam'd.
If Virtue and if Reason can prevail,
If some faint spark of Honour still remain,
If Pray'rs, if Tears, have any Pow'r to move,
These shall plead strong in *Periander's* Cause,
Shall wake the generous Temper in his Soul,
And root each selfish Passion from his Breast. [*Exeunt.*]



S C E N E IV.

Enter Procles and Hypsenor.

Pro. Success, like this, has far out-run my Hopes,
And a full stream of Joy pours in upon us:
To win so cheaply such a Crown as *Corinth*,
Is what no sanguine Wish cou'd dare to promise.

Hyp. The thoughtless Fools fell blindly in the Snare;
You sooth'd 'em with their Idol Liberty,
And in the Word there dwelt a secret Charm,
That turn'd the Edge of ev'ry threatening Sword,
Dislodg'd that Fiend Rebellion from their Breasts,
And clos'd her hundred *Argus* Eyes in Sleep.

Pro. Ambition scorns her Bounds shou'd be pre-
scrib'd.

If I deprive him of his Crown alone,
Half of its glorious Aims my Soul will lose,
Lag in the Race, nor reach the destin'd Goal.
His Queen, a Prize superior to a World,
Shall grace these Arms with more than Mortal Beauty;
Melissa! there's Enchantment in the Sound,
I find my Soul enlarg'd, that I am more
Than Man, and equal to that amorous God,
Who in *Amphytrion's* Form enjoy'd *Alcmena*,
And made obedient Nature wait his Will.

Hyp. Did you not burn with Envy and Revenge,
To see her in the Arms of *Periander*?

Pro. Yes, when at first the fatal Tale I heard,
A sudden Madness ran thro' all my Frame,
And, like a Fury, with malignant Rage,

I vow'd Destruction to the Race of Man.

Hyp. Just was your Anger, your Resentment just;
For she's the Master-piece of all her Sex,
Her outward Form the Rival of her Mind.

Pro. Description is too weak to paint her Charms,
Her Form is like the op'ning Dawn of Spring,
That Joy diffuses thro' the whole Creation:
Her Soul! where is the Language can express it?
Divinity sits strong implanted there,
And in her Looks such Dignity appears,
That all Beholders Adoration pay,
And change th' inferior Deities for her.

Hyp. See where she comes, her Beauty still the same,
And breaks with Lustre thro' a Cloud of Grief.

Enter Queen, Clarinda, Zeno and Alcander.

Queen. My Thanks receive, but mine's a little all,
Oh may the Gods, omnipotent to grant,
Reward you with the largest Gifts of Heav'n.

Pro. Where so much Innocence and Beauty meet,
Who wou'd not draw a Sword in such a Cause?
Not all the former Actions of my Life
Did e'er these Transports to my Soul impart,
As that kind Fortune smiles on *Procles* now;
That Heav'n on me has fixt her Choice, to free
Beauty so wrong'd, such Virtue in distress.

Alc. Then we're betray'd, and *Procles* is a
Villain.

Zen. Such are all Tyrants; O the damn'd
Dissembler! *Aside.*

Queen. Now crown your Actions with immortal
Fame,

Now finish greatly what you well begun,
Replace my *Periander* on his Throne.

Pro. There's not a Boon that you can ask beside,
Not one Request but I shou'd grant with Joy;
But I am bound by Honour's sacred Tye,
Never to fight in *Periander's* Cause,
But to my self assume the Reins of Pow'r,
And wear the Crown, the People freely give:
And thou, the fairest of the fairest Kind,
Prudent, and wise, this Fortune's Outcast leave,
And, as you were, be still the Queen of *Corinth*;
Procles lays all his Glories at your Feet,
And falls the Vassal to the Throne of Beauty.

Queen. Ambition, of all Passions sure the worst,
Not only tempts you to usurp a Throne,
To break thro' all the sacred Rules of Justice,
But oh! the dire Effects of lawless Pow'r!
Was not his Crown enough for you to seize,
But like a Thief, a Robber, you must take
The only Comfort that is left him now?
Let all the future Ages brand my Name,
Let Heav'n show'r down unheard-of Plagues upon me,
If I consent to be but thine in Thought:
Know, if Ambition can produce her Monster,
Virtue in me her Votary shall find.

Pro. Do you retire, and let the People know
That I will pardon 'em their late Rebellion;
But if they dare on me such Tumults raise,
They to their Cost shall know I will be King;
I will not have the Shadow, but the Pow'r,
I'll learn Experience from your former Lord,
You took Advantage of his easy Sway,

Know

Know that the Reins are firmer in my Hand;
I'll not with Sceptres rule, but Rods of Iron.

[Retires with the Queen.]

Zen. The Man that on a Prince's Word depends,
Is certainly betray'd: What is a Throne?
What are its glitt'ring Charms? that tempt us thus
To spurn at Virtue, and defy the Gods:
Rise thou Supreme, and let thy Thunder speak
Thy Pow'r, our Freedom, and the Tyrant's Death.

[Exeunt.]

Pro. O thou, whose Charms are of the brightest
Mould,

Let me no longer sigh, nor sue in vain:
Is there a Thought, a Wish that you can form,
A Boon that *Procles* will refuse to give?
You may command your Vassal as you please:
Nay, do not frown, Love rages to that height,
Enjoyment only can assuage its Flame.

Queen. Cou'd you conceive that any Bribe on Earth
Wou'd make me stain my yet unspotted Soul?
Cou'd you conceive that I wou'd e'er consent
To wed the vile Usurper of a Throne?

Hyp. If you will listen to a Friend's Advice,
Give her some time to weigh it in her Thoughts,
And she'll be more obedient to your Wishes.

Pro. I wou'd not have you trifle with my Patience;
Tho' now Love reigns the Passion of my Soul,
Yet may your haughty Scorn, and proud Contempt,
To Hatred soon this Female Dotage turn:
Know too, a Victor's Right is in my Power,
And what cou'd hinder me from seizing it?
But till to-morrow you have time to think,

C 3

Then,

Then, if you play the Coz'nage of your Sex,
 If you are still so obstinately coy,
 Know, that I'll take by Force what you deny,
 And make you Partner of my Bed and Throne. [*Exit.*

Queen. Now the Storm rises to a height indeed,
 And Fortune points her keenest Malice here:
 What can he hope? That Time will gain his Ends?
 If I my Honour to this Villain yield,
 Then let the Earth its Surface open wide,
 Bury me quick in her capacious Womb,
 Let the swift Lightning of Almighty Jove
 This very instant strike me to the Centre,
 Let each sharp Misery this Life affords
 Be pour'd with double Wrath upon my Head.

Clar. O calm this gnawing Anguish of your Soul!
Procles is but a Stranger yet to Love,
 He feels not half your Conquest in his Heart,
 Your Charms make such Impression on his Mind,
 He dares not touch your Honour or your Life?

Queen. Oh, thou art much too sanguine in thy
 Thoughts!

There's not a Villany that other Men
 Wou'd start and shudder only but to think on,
 Which he will fear to put in Execution.

Clar. I cannot find in all my Chain of Thought,
 A Means to save you from impending Ruin;
 I dread the Light, the sad Approach of Morn,
 When you your last, your fatal Answer give.

Queen. Cease to afflict your Mind with anxious
 Thoughts;
 Know, I am firm, and resolute to dye,
 Rather than *Procles* shall presume to lay

The smallest Stain, or Blemish on my Virtue.
 With Pleasure shall I leave this World below,
 One Round of Misery, one Scene of Woe!
 The Grecian Bards shall sing *Melissa's* Name,
 Each Virgin, pay her Tribute to my Fame;
 The Gods shall give me too the just Applause,
 Who to preserve the sacred Marriage Laws,
 Have sacrific'd my Life in Virtue's Cause.

The End of the Second Act.



C 4

ACT



PERIANDER.

ACT III. SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Palace.

Enter the Queen, and Clarinda.

QUEEN.

BEHOLD at length the Hour of Fate is
come,
Yet do I find my Soul serene within;
For if the Tyrant rob me of my Life,
It is beneath my Care: For what is Life?
The Sage Philosopher is puzzl'd here,
Nor knows the Source from whence it is deriv'd:
We dye, and are as we had never been,
Breath that sustains our Life, is but a Spark
That for a Moment keeps the Flame alive;
When it expires, the Body turns to Ashes,
While, as soft Air, the lighter Spirit flies.

Clar. Yes, you may laugh at all their little Malice;
The good and virtuous are the Care of Heav'n;
A Fool may think it Misery to dye,
A wise Man knows it is a Port of Ease,

Nor

Nor thinks he truly lives before his Death.
The Soul must first be in this Furnace try'd,
Before the Gold in its true Lustre shines.

Enter Hypsenor.

Hyp. What! is such Beauty form'd for Grief alone?
Beauty, that kindles Joy in ev'ry Heart,
But thine: Those Tears will chill the lovely Plant:
Opprest with Grief, 'twill sicken, fade, and dye.
Let *Procles* place it in another Soil,
Then shall it flourish in its former Bloom,
The Praise and Wonder of each ravish'd Eye.

Queen. Oh name not *Procles*, for my Blood runs cold,
And my Soul shudders at the impious Thought:
Are you the first to urge me to the Crime?
You, who my Lord has nourish'd in his Bosom,
Lov'd you with more than filial Tendernefs,
Are you, th' abandon'd Wretch that wou'd betray him?

Hyp. And am I thus rewarded for my Care?
I, as your Guardian Genius, came to warn you,
To steer you safe from the impending Rock:
You know not half the Warmth of *Procles*' Temper,
Too fierce, too haughty to endure Controul,
The lightest Spark of that will raise a Fire
That blazes out in Fury and Destruction.

Queen. What! dost thou think that I am form'd
like thee,
To change and turn with ev'ry Blast of Wind?
No! Fortitude and Virtue arm my Soul,
Nor can a dreadful Pomp of threatning Words
Tear *Periander* from *Melissa*'s Heart.

Hyp.

Hyp. What is this Deity that you adore?
 What is your fav'rite Idol, but a Shadow?
 Women, when old, and slighted by the World,
 First preach the rigid Doctrine to their Sex,
 And envy Joys they have not Pow'r to taste.
 Oh, be advis'd, and think ere 'tis too late,
 Run not on Racks, Imprisonment, and Death,
 For such a Phantom, sacrifice your Life!

Queen. To dye! Death tho' array'd in all his Terrors,
 Is Pleasure, to the hated Tyrant's Love.

Hyp. Then you are lost,——for see, where *Procles*
 comes.

Enter Procles.

Pro. Well, has my Clemency a good Effect?
 And will you grant me what my Soul desires?
 Crown ev'ry Wish, and season ev'ry Joy?
 Why that deep Sigh, and why that downward Look?
 Who that is wise wou'd seek a ruin'd Man?
 'Tis Folly to adore a setting Sun:

Procles, my Fair One, shall repair your Loss,
 And banish *Periander* from your Thoughts.

Queen. If you cou'd give me such unbounded Pow'r,
 That ev'ry Word were absolute as Fate,
 If you could make me Empress of the World,
 All that the spacious Universe contains
 Wou'd look but mean and trifling in these Eyes,
 If I must buy them at so dear a Price,
 As is the Loss of Virtue, and of Honour.

Pro. I am too deeply vers'd in Womankind
 To be deceiv'd by all your subtle Ways:
 Praîse your Wiles upon some weaker Man,

I see thro' each thin Cobweb of your Art :
It is your Pride, not Honour, rules you now ;
And tho' with Skill you play the female Part,
Yet I can pry into your inmost Thoughts,
And read the Crown of *Corinth* in your Heart.

Queen. The Crown ! a Trifle, when exchange'd for
Virtue !

Yes, Tyrant ! you shall find—nay, spare those Frowns,
I'll dye a Martyr to the glorious Cause.

Pro. Since Kindness fails, let Force now take its turn.
Honour's a Bugbear for religious Fools ;
I will be govern'd by great Nature's Laws ;
And when I once have gratify'd my Will,
Then with Contempt and Scorn I'll spurn thee off.
Guards, seize her there, and see this haughty Woman
To my Apartment instantly convey'd.

Queen. Know Tyrant, that thy base Commands are vain :
That Heav'n may with its keenest Lightning blast
A Wretch that is the Stain of human Nature,
Shall be my last and most effectual Prayer.

Hyp. May I presume to offer my Advice ?
Try if a Prison's Hardships can prevail
To make her more complying to your Will.

Pro. That stubborn Soul of yours shall yet be tam'd,
For I'll deprive you of each Glimpse of Light,
Your Sustenance shall be but just enough
To save a Life that you wou'd wish to lose ;
I'll see if Hunger, Cold, Imprisonment,
And Chains, can break the Fierceness of that Spirit,

Queen. Thou art a Stranger to *Melissa's* Soul ;
I laugh, thou Tyrant, at thy poor Design :
Know that a Dungeon has superior Charms

To

To an Usurper's Throne, his loathsome Bed:
 I'd rather, like a Beggar, live on Alms,
 Expos'd to Poverty, Contempt, and Want,
 Than riot in the Pomp of Luxury,
 Than be thy Wife, thou Fiend in human Shape!

Pro. Convey her off, for I will hear no more.

Queen. Know, that thy utmost Malice I defy,
 Meek as a Lamb to Slaughter will I go,
 No Coward Sigh shall from *Melissa* flow,
 With Pleasure shall I seek th' *Elysian* Shade,
 My Loss of Life by Virtue more than paid. [Ex.]

Procles and Hypsenor remain.

Pro. Envy now rules unrival'd in my Soul,
 And Love's entirely banish'd from my Breast:
 If it shou'd reach this *Periander's* Ears,
 That his *Melissa* triumphs in her Virtue,
 He wou'd despise that trivial Loss a Crown,
 And in this Jewel be compleatly blest.

Hyp. My Lord! you will applaud the lucky Thought!
 As I was once this *Periander's* Friend,
 My Spies shall seek his Habitation out,
 Then I'll pretend to come with full Design
 Our Ties of former Friendship to renew,
 And by Degrees will kindle such a Fire
 Of Jealousy and Madness in his Breast,
 That all their Counter-Arts shall not avail
 To quench a Flame, that, as it burns, destroys.

Pro. Be all your Emissaries now employ'd,
 To find what Place this *Periander* haunts;
 Perhaps a savage Treatment from his Hands
 May the strong Bent of Inclination turn;
 And as the Sex by Nature's prone to change,

Flying

Flying with full Resentment from his Arms,
Revenge may give me what her Love denies.

Hyp. *Procles'* Commands shall be *Hypsenor's* Law. [*Ex.*

Pro. Gods! how my Soul exults! oh glorious
Thought!

To think, that I shall blast my Rival's Joy!

To think, that Jealousy his Bane shall prove,

Perpetual Torments in his Bosom move,

And poyson all his fancy'd Draughts of Love. [*Ex.*]



SCENE *Aristides's House.*

Enter Periander and Aristides in Disguise.

Per. Ambition! nothing is too hard for thee!
Rul'd by the Influence of thy fatal Charms,
Man fears no Law, nor human, nor divine:
Tell me, my Friend, some way to stem this Torrent,
That with such Fury bears down all before it.

Arist. It will be sure too rash, with such a Force
As yours, to fight against the Pow'r of *Procles*;
Dismiss your Troops, and wait 'till fav'ring Heav'n
Some nobler Opportunity bestows,
Of wreaking your Revenge upon this Traytor:
Safe in our mean Disguise, no prying Eye
Will e'er suspect a *Periander* here.

Per. Alas! how fickle is all human Grandeur,
How strange, how sudden are the Turns of Fortune!
Cou'd I imagine such a Storm at hand,
When ev'ry thing around me seem'd so calm?
Thus the great Ocean wears a pleasing Face,
Smooth as a Glass, and still as standing Lakes;

Too

Too soon th' unwary Seaman is betray'd,
 His golden Hopes of Happiness are vain,
 The dreadful Tempests high as Mountains rise,
 Waves beat on Waves, Billows on Billows roll,
 And all their Fury on the Vessel falls.

Arist. Alas, how wretched is the State of *Corinth*!
 Too sad an Emblem of the first rude Chaos,
 Where Anarchy and black Confusion reign'd,
 Darkness and Terror brooding o'er the whole.

Per. Where is *Melissa* now? O dire Reflection!
 What Pow'r Divine with its protecting Arm
 Can in the universal Ruin save her?
 There is a Dawn of Hope relieves my Pain,
 For in that heav'nly Countenance there dwells
 Such Majesty and Sweetness mix'd together,
 That even Brutes might lose their native Fierceness,
 And at one Look grow tractable and tame.

Arist. My Soul dissolves, and softens into Tears,
 To see a Monarch, human Nature's Pride,
 Fall'n from the glorious Height he once enjoy'd,
 To be the Object of Contempt and Scorn.

Per. Adversity has prov'd that thou alone
 Follow'st the Fortunes of a ruin'd Man:
 Where now is all that Multitude of Friends,
 Who, when I smil'd, cou'd force a ready Smile,
 Who, when I frown'd, cou'd force a ready Frown?
 Yes, thus the Oak, when stript of all its Boughs,
 Is scorn'd by ev'ry little worthless Shrub
 It shelter'd once from Storms; but let 'em pass:—
 These are Plebeian Souls, of basest Clay,
 Who fly me, as the Leaves in Autumn Trees,
 Which the rude Winds from Parent Branches tear.

Arist.

Arist. They are the petty Insects of a Day,
That play and flutter round a Summer Sun;
But when the Northern Blasts, and wintry Cold,
Drive him reluctant to another Clime,
Then into Holes and Corners they retire,
No longer by his Influence warm'd to Life.

Per. I once imagin'd I was more than Man;
Heav'n has for this in Anger cast me down,
To prove that Empire is the Gift of Gods:
That they to Man both Good and Ill dispense,
That Life and Death, that Poverty and Wealth,
Are not of human Choice, but spring from *Jove*:
Hear but a late Example of his Pow'r;
Th' *Affyrian* King, proud Monarch of the *East*,
That spread his Conquests over half the Globe,
Made scepter'd Princes as his Vassals wait,
Their prostrate Necks the Footstool of his Throne,
His Light of Reason now entirely lost,
Leads in the Woods his Life among the Brutes;
The Grass his Food, the Dews of Heav'n his Drink,
And seems a Monument of Wrath divine,
Because he proudly thought himself a God.

Arist. *Jove*, tho' he may assert his Pow'r below,
And punish human Pride; yet in his Wrath,
Mercy, his Fav'rite Attribute, prevails;
And that vindictive Hand that cast you down,
With tender Care can raise you up again.
Suppose you shou'd dispatch a Messenger,
To seek *Hypsenor* out? he must be yours,
For it was you that gave him second Life,
That from the Earth the groveling Insect took,
Nourish'd and cheer'd, and warm'd it into Man.

Per.

ist.

Per. Haste, and some trusty Agent strait employ,
Who will conduct *Hypsenor* to our Aid.

Arist. Your Orders shall be faithfully perform'd.

Per. Thou art the Balm that heals each Wound
within,

And while I call thee mine, I still am happy. [Ex.



SCENE draws and discovers the Queen in
a Dungeon.

Queen. In me a Picture of this World is drawn,
That all our Hopes in earthly things are vain,
For mortal Happiness is built on Sand;
And while we fondly think we tread secure,
The faithless Ground at once our Feet deceives,
And in the whelming Ruin we are lost:
Yet shall not all this Scene of Horrors join'd,
Work the least Change upon my steady Soul:
This Place, in all its Terrors thus array'd,
Looks in my Eye, like Paradise it self,
More glorious than the Empire of the World,
While I maintain the Honour of my Sex,
While Virtue sits unsully'd in my Breast.
Must I thus pine away my lonely Hours,
Nor know the poor *Clarinda's* friendly Aid?

Enter Clarinda.

Clar. You see all-gracious Heav'n some Help affords,
Has generous *Lycon* with Compassion mov'd,
That I may try to calm your Rage of Grief.
My Eyes cou'd like a Fountain run with Tears,

Nor

Nor Time should ever find their Sources dry;
Oh what a moving Spectacle is here!
A Queen that shou'd be Mistress of the World,
Shut in the narrow Limits of a Prison,
Bred in the Poms and Softness of a Court,
Now sunk beneath the Misery of Slaves.

Queen. Why, my *Clarinda*, why this Flow of Grief?
Is not a Dungeon, is not Death it self,
A Choice more worthy of a virtuous Mind,
Than Greatness bought at the Expence of Honour?
What, tho' the Tyrant multiply his Plagues,
Vents all his little Malice on this Head,
Yet shall he find a Woman, when she's arm'd
With Innocence, is never to be conquer'd.

Clar. Who can behold a Queen, her Country's Pride,
To such a miserable State reduc'd?
Who can see this, and yet refrain from Tears,
Cannot be human, but the worst of Brutes:
What, was that Face divine for Dungeons made?
Those Eyes, that cast a heav'nly Lustre round,
That like the Sun each pleas'd Beholder cheer'd,
Must they for ever be debarr'd from Light?
I'll think of it no more, lest I grow mad,
And rail at ev'ry Deity of Heav'n.

Queen. Hold, my *Clarinda*, hold! let not thy Thoughts
Presume to tax the Justice of the Gods;
Their Ways are sacred, hid from mortal Eyes,
Let Man the dangerous Scrutiny avoid:
What, shall a Creature form'd of Dust, pretend
(Corruption's Son! and Brother of the Worm,)
To pry into the dark mysterious Scene,
Presumptuous judge of his Creator's Acts!

D

Why

Why shoud'st thou wonder Mortals are unhappy?
 For, like a Tree that's burden'd with its Leaves,
 Where these must fade, while those look green, and
 flourish.

So is Man's State, his Grandeur one enjoys,
 The other sinks beneath a Load of Ruin.

Clar. You are a shining Instance to the World,
 What glorious Hardships Woman can endure,
 When greatly suff'ring in the Cause of Virtue.

Queen. Believe what now by *Juno's* self I swear;
 I take more Pleasure in such Chains as these,
 Tho' in a noisom Dungeon thus confin'd,
 Than Strings of Pearl the richest Shores can give.

Enter Lycon with Lycophron.

Ha ! can Barbarity relent ! for see
 My Son——Come to my Arms, my only Comfort.
 Unhappy Youth ! for what a Scene of Woes
 Art thou reserv'd ? Sure some unlucky Star
 Reign'd and presided at thy fatal Birth.

Lycop. Restrain your Tears, for know, from you I
 learn,
 To laugh at all the Injuries of Fortune:
 Oh were my Strength but equal to my Soul,
 I'd pull the impious Tyrant from his Throne,
 Revenge my Father's, and my Country's Wrongs.

[*Exeunt.*

Clar. Look all ye Gods, from your Celestial Seats,
 And view the noblest Object of your Praise,
 An injur'd Virtue, and a suff'ring Queen !
 Her Soul yet unconcern'd, her Temper calm,
 And quite unruff'd in this Storm of Fate.

[*Exit.*
The



The SCENE draws and discovers Periander and Aristides, to them Enter Hypsenor.

Hyp. Oh Greatness! thou art but a flatt'ring Dream,
A watry Bubble, lighter than the Air;
Can *Periander* then be sunk so low,
A Man, that by a Look, a single Nod,
Cou'd either Life or Death denounce at Will,
In purple Vestments cloath'd, with Gold adorn'd,
Now in the Habit of a Slave conceal'd;
Who late was lost amidst a Train of Friends,
Is now deserted by the numerous Crowd,
And one, but one remains.—————

Per. Oh speak! and tell me! Is my *Corinth* lost?
Does Ruin stalk with her gigantick Steps,
And stain each wretched Street with Marks of Blood?
For this, and all that human Eyes detest,
Can *Procles* view with more than savage Joy.

Hyp. But Trifles these, with other Ills compar'd;
I cou'd, but I forbear, a Scene unfold
Wou'd make you shudder thro' each trembling Limb.

Per. Rack not my Mind with sad presaging Thoughts,
With something worse than is ev'n Death it self.

Hyp. Suppose that your—yet will I keep it from you,
The calm Philosopher may boast of Patience,
But had his Injury been great as yours,
His Resolution wou'd have fail'd him here;
The Man had been conspicuous in his Wrath.

Per. I stand prepar'd for Fortune's utmost Rage,
Let her point all her Weapons at my Breast,

I am superior to her ev'ry Frown.

Hyp. What if *Melissa*——

Per. Hold ! I charge thee hold !

Dare not on her to cast the least Reflection ;

Melissa soars so high above her Sex,

That Malice with her sharp envenom'd Tongue,
(Like Death, an universal Leveller)

Yet knows it is in vain to wound her Fame,

So great, and so exalted is her Virtue,

That who doubts this, may doubt that there are Gods.

Hyp. And art thou then that fond believing
Husband ?

She is as infamous ——

Per. Forbear, rash Man,

For if you dare to speak that Word again,

And I such Insolence with Patience hear,

Then let my Sword sleep tamely by my Side,

And Boys proclaim the Coward as he passes.

Hyp. I see it is in vain to reason with you,
And so farewell.

Per. Stay, I am calm again ;

And will endure the Torture like a Man,

But oh, indulge the Weakness of a Friend ;

Oh do not paint it in its blackest Colours,

But by Degrees disclose the dreadful Scene,

Lest my disorder'd Soul shou'd quit its Seat,

And leave its Mansion ere the Story's told.

Hyp. Be Witness all ye immortal Pow'rs above,
I wou'd have kept the Secret from your Ear,

But fatally you force it from my Breast :

Put Patience on, and arm your Mind with Courage ;

To bear the sharpest Wound that Fate can give :

Your

Your Queen, your Queen, your fair *Melissa*——

Per. What?

Hyp. Is false.

Per. Torments and Plagues! but hold! I'll hear thee.

Hyp. False with your Foe.

Per. Villain!

Hyp. With *Procles*.

Per. Ha! dare not——

Hyp. By Heav'n she is.

Per. Damn'd, damn'd *Melissa*!

Hyp. Fled! vilely fled, to fill the Arms of *Procles*,
To prostitute her Beauty to a Monster.

[*Periander sinks into the Arms of Aristides.*
Presumptuous Man! too confidently strong!
Nor knew he was too weak to stand the Tryal;
Behold, unwilling Life returns again,
And the faint Colour to his Cheeks restores.

[*They raise him up, he pauses.*

Per. If she is false, then I am lost indeed,
For on *Melissa* I had fixt my Heart;
Speak! speak! and ease the Anguish of my Soul,
What, did she then resign her Virtue tamely,
Or did the Villain force her to his Bed?

Hyp. Oh no! with Smiles she flew to his Embrace,
And seem'd to scorn her *Periander's* Friends,
So frantick was her Joy, it must be Madness.

Arist. How oft this Sycophant has talkt of Love,
In well-feign'd Raptures fondly claspt your Neck,
Sooth'd you with Words, and Looks more soothing
still,

And yet unmov'd, your Loss of Empire view'd,
Nay, like a Burden flung you from her Arms,

And with Ingratitude unknown before,
 Resign'd her Beauty, Virtue, and her All,
 A willing Victim to his brutal Lust.

Per. Then the whole World can't shew another
 Wretch,

Whose tortur'd Soul is half so rack'd as mine:

How did her flatt'ring Art, and treacherous Smile,
 My easy, unsuspecting Faith beguile?

How often have her Lips been prest to mine?

As oft she swore, *Melissa's* only thine.

I view'd the false One in a flatt'ring Glass,

Nor found the Serpent lurking in the Grass:

By Arts, like these, the wily Crocodile,

The Tyrant Monster of *Egyptian Nile*,

Allures some Mortal by his human Cries,

Till at his Feet the trembling Victim lies,

And bleeds, the false Dissembler's Sacrifice.

The End of the Third Act.



A C T



PERIANDER.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Dungeon.

The Queen, Clarinda, and Lycophron discover'd.

QUEEN.



HO that is wise wou'd e'er this Life
esteem?

Life! of mean Actions, but one constant
Round;

Half of the World the Day in Trifles spend,
And when Night comes, in Folly's Bed are laid,
In Dreams confus'd are lost — in broken Thoughts, —
And wild Imaginations of the Soul;
Fast sleeping by us, all our Reason lies,
And for the time we are as arrant Brutes
As those that sleep, or in the Stalls, or Field:
Was I not made for nobler Ends than these?
Soar higher my Ambition, and my Hopes,
Scorn thy inglorious Doom, thy mortal State,
And boldly vecture on another World.

D 4

Clar.

Clar. Oh let not Grief prey on that lovely Form !
 Grief, that destructive Fever of the Soul :
 That eats its way by sure, tho' slow degrees,
 Till one dim Paleness spreads o'er all the Face,
 And the fair colouring of Nature dies.

Enter Lycon.

Lyc. Can you forgive me, if my hasty Zeal
 Intrude thus rudely on your mournful Hours,
 Sacred to Grief alone ; this melting Heart
 Is soften'd into Pity by your Tears,
 Nor can I see such Virtue in Distress,
 Without attempting to remove the Cause.

Queen. Can from a Mortal Words like these proceed ?
 Sure Heav'n at last, compassionately just,
 Has kindly listen'd to my ardent Pray'r.

Lyc. I am a Mortal, whom thy Suff'rings mov'd,
 To risque my Life in fair *Melissa's* Cause,
 To make you smile at ev'ry Ill you feel,
 Your much lov'd Lord, your *Periander* lives.

Queen. Not ev'n fond Parents, when their darling
 Child,
 Who with some painful Sicknes labour'd long,
 While Death, that Tyrant, hover'd o'er his Prey,
 Is to new Life beyond their Hopes restor'd,
 Feel half such Transports as *Melissa* now.

Lyc. This pleasing News *Hypsenor* lately told me,
 He had not Leisure to inform me more,
 Therefore my utmost Diligence I'll use
 To find the sad Abode of *Periander* ;
 And when the Ev'ning Shades have veil'd the Earth,
 When the dark Night and Sleep begin their Reign,
 And

And universal Nature is at Rest:
Then to this Dungeon will I take my way,
Restore you to the Joys of Liberty,
And safe conduct you to your wishing Lord.

Queen. May Heav'n give all your ev'ry Wish can
frame,

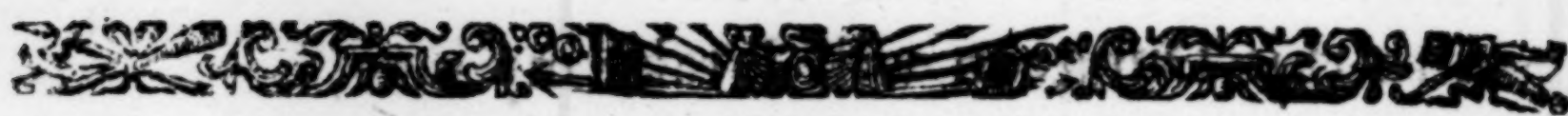
And make you fortunate beyond your Hope:
And, as he listen'd to the Wretches Pray'r,
Oh ye kind Pow'rs! keep ev'ry Storm of Fate
From him, who to Compassion lent an Ear,
From him, who not asham'd to be a Man,
Cou'd shed a Tear at human Misery,
And in Affliction's Cause endanger Life.

Lycop. By my great Father's sacred Name I swear,
And by my ev'ry Hope of future Fame,
If Heav'n once make me the *Corinthian* King,
I'll wear thee, *Lycon*, nearest to my Heart;
There shall not be a Gift within my Pow'r,
But I, on thee, with Pleasure shall bestow.

Lyc. I, have no sordid mercenary View,
My Soul's superior to so mean a Thought;
If Fate will by my Means *Melissa* free,
Not all the Riches in a Monarch's Pow'r,
Cou'd half the pleasing Satisfaction give,
As will this Action to my ravish'd Soul. [Exit.

Clar. Some God has gen'rous *Lycon* sure inspir'd,
With zeal he came to rescue us from Woe,
To grant the Light to our desiring Eyes;
'Tis the all-careful Eye of *Jove*, that sees
The Dangers which surround poor helpless Man,
Has sent some God propitious to your Aid,
In human Shape, to set *Melissa* free. [Exeunt.

S C E N E

S C E N E *Aristides's House.*

Enter Periander, and Aristides.

Per. Oh cou'd I fly from such a World as this!
A World where Happiness was never known,
Where Woes as certain are the Lot of Man,
Are Things of absolute Necessity,
As the dark Night succeeds the glorious Day.

Arist. The Gods wou'd not this Punishment inflict,
Unless some Crime unheard-of had been acted,
That calls aloud for such a Wrath divine.
Ev'n amidst all the Pomp you once enjoy'd,
I've heard a Sigh, that issu'd from your Heart ;
All your Extravagance of Joy put on,
Oft in your Eye I've mark'd the swelling Tear,
Sure Sign of some deep-rooted Grief within :
Too like th' appearance of a wint'ry Sun,
That shines indeed, but thro' a wat'ry Cloud.

Per. Oh thou hast touch'd me in a tender Part,
And I that horrid Story will disclose,
Which none but *Periander* knew before ;
I lock'd the fatal Secret in my Breast,
That like th' envenom'd Shirt *Alcides* wore,
Has stung its wretched Master to the Heart :
O *Aristides*, can I trust thee now,
Canst thou be brib'd my Secrets to betray ?

Arist. If you believe such Baseness lodges here,
This Moment plunge your Dagger in my Heart,
There read your Name in deepest Lines engrav'd :
When you repose your Secret in my Bosom,

The World might tempt me, and yet tempt in vain:
 Riches may work upon a vulgar Soul,
 Torments may wrest it from the Coward's Breast;
 But all the Tortures Mortals can inflict,
 Shall never tear it from my steady Soul:
 There in its inmost Parts securely plac'd,
 Like two dear Friends, in strictest Union join'd,
 Where nothing parts 'em but the Hour of Death.

Per. Then I'll unlock the Spring from whence have
 flow'd

Hi& All these Misfortunes on my guilty Head:
 Ere Death had clos'd my aged Father's Eyes,
 He took me in his Arms; My Son, said he,
 (While Tears in Streams ran trickling down his Face)
 Attentive, hearken to a dying Parent;
 Swear that you will not take the Crown of *Corinth*,
 But will restore her ancient State. — I swore,
 By all the dreaded Pow'rs that rule the World,
 By that illustrious Orb that shines above,
 By all the golden Stars that grace the Sky,
 In ev'ry Point to execute his Will.

Arist. I see too plain, that 'tis the Hand of Heav'n
 Has plung'd you in this depth of Misery.

Per. Oh the destructive Heat! and Fire of Youth!
 That banishes all Reason from our Thoughts,
 Led by the Dictates of a blind Ambition,
 I saw the Object in a flatt'ring Mirror,
 That at a Distance made the Prospect lovely,
 That made ev'n Ruin pleasing in my Eye,
 That made me revel in my People's Blood,
 And poorly triumph in their Deaths ——— Because
 Their brighter Merit tarnish'd all my own.

But

But now the Masque is off, I clearly see
The fond Deceits of a distemper'd Brain.

Arist. Heav'n, like fond Parents, tho' it may correct
The Follies of its Child, yet now perhaps
Designs once more to lift you up to Greatness:
Haste, and with Hecatombs the Gods appease.

Per. What Sacrifice? what Victim can I offer?
The never-dying Worm will gnaw within,
Nor can I blot it from my Memory:
Words are too faint to speak my suff'ring Heart:
For if the Tortures of another World
Are more than what I feel, they are a Fiction—
Oh scatter me, ye Winds, and tear this Form,
Disperse it to each Corner of the World,
That by my dire Example warn'd, no Fool
May ever split upon this Rock again.

Arist. O calm the raging Tempest in your Mind!
You seem to look as if your frightened Soul
Had started from its Seat; as if pale Death
Had scar'd her thence, and reign'd sole Victor there:
Be patient, or this Hurricane of Passion
Will surely let Distraction loose upon you.

Per. In vain you wou'd apply your healing Hand,
Mine is a Wound that never can be cur'd:
Think what it is, to be by Heav'n abandon'd,
And blame me then——nay, by *Melissa* too:
Still that fair false One comes across my Thoughts,
What Pangs, what endless Torture in my Soul?
That faithless Creature will infect my Brain,
Will make me mad, and I shall curse my self;
Curse her, and ev'ry Woman for her Sake:
Curse this gay Trifle,—this deluding World,—

That

That heap'd a train of Mischiefs on my Head:
 Oh cou'd I quit that toilsome Burden, Life,
 I'd sink with Pleasure to the peaceful Grave,
 And there for ever shut out all my Cares. [Exeunt.



SCENE *The Palace.*

Enter Hypsenor and Procles.

Hyp. The treacherous *Lycon* has betray'd his Trust,
 Has set the Queen and other Captives free,
 And now to *Periander* points the Way.

Pro. If this be true, oh Death to ev'ry Hope!
 For, spite of all my Arts, I feel a Fire
 That ev'ry Moment bursts into a Flame.
 Oh Love! imperious Monarch of Mankind!
 What, tho' I spread my Conquest o'er the World,
 Yet is the Victor vanquisht in his turn:
 In vain I try to rend this Chain of Adamant,
 And, like a Lion, taken in the Toils,
 Entangle more, the more I strive to break 'em.

Hyp. My Lord, there is but one Attempt remains.
 I stung him to the Soul with jealous Flames,
 Rais'd such a furious Tumult in his Breast,
 That 'tis not in the Pow'r of Heav'n, or Fate,
 To give a Cure to this Heart-wounded Wretch;
 I have already fram'd a Tale, that wears
 The Face of Truth; the Fool will easy gorge
 The Bait, and I shall mould him at my Will.

Pro. Success must wait on ev'ry Act of thine:
 Well, let the stubborn Fair despise my Love,

My

My Vengeance shall like Lightning dart upon her,
And strike the Traitors in an Instant dead. [Exit

Hyp. Hold! my good Genius bids me not be rash:
Suppose that Fate shou'd take another Turn,
And our late Monarch to his Crown restore;
That I may have some Merit left to plead,
I'll try to cheat the watchful Eye of *Procles*,
And keep conceal'd where *Periander* haunts:
Thus shall I lay up something like the Ant,
When Winter and the stormy Weather come. [Exit



SCENE *Aristides's House.*

Enter Periander and Aristides.

Per. In vain, O *Jove*, you plac'd in human Breasts
Conscience, your great Vicegerent here below;
To warn us from the first Approach of Guilt:
Thou tempter Gold! who can resist thy Charms?
Ambition bears down all with mighty Sway,
Insatiate Avarice takes up ev'ry Thought;
Each Passion throws a Veil before our Eyes,
That rear, as the envenom'd Adders young,
The unhappy Bosom where such Vipers breed.

Arist. Reason is too, too feeble to oppose 'em!
Man to Destruction runs with eager pace,
Nor sees his Ruin — till his Fate is past.

Per. Were I the Lord of all this World affords,
Oh with what Pleasure wou'd I change it now,
For all that sweet Serenity of Mind
That happy *Periander* once enjoy'd;
Before he from his Heart the real Gem

For such meer Counterfeits unwisely cast.

Arist. And yet these trifling Toys with glitt'ring Charms

Shone in *Melissa's* Eye; and with strong Force
Attractive, drew her from the Paths of Virtue,
And fixt her in a lustful Satyr's Arms.

Per. Oh Greatness! bane of Virtue and of Honour!
Sure Great and Good can never meet in one:
Who wou'd not rather wish in homely Cells,
Or meanest Cottages to lead his Life,
Where dwells Content, inestimable Prize!
There, when the Labours of the Day are past,
Some faithful Wife to meet her Husband flies,
Joy in her Face, and Virtue in her Heart.

Arist. The Man thus blest, ne'er wishes to be great,
For Pow'r his Pity, not his Envy moves:
He knows, that to be great, is to be wretched;
Parent of Woes! and fruitful Source of Cares!
No Tyrant here deprives him of his Bliss,
Nor violates the sacred Rites of Marriage,
Their Joys thus mutual make yet greater Joy,
And their Griefs vanish when thus equal Born.

Enter Messenger, with a Letter.

Per. " My Concern for your Safety, made me dive into
" the Designs of *Melissa*, who is not content with sacri-
" ficing all that is valuable in her Sex to *Procles*, but is
" now coming with full Intention to take away your Life.

Melissa! what! that smiling Fair! can she,
She who was all my Life! can she do this?
Hold! let me think! it is impossible!

Nature

Nature may sometimes err in her Productions,
 Yet she can never bring forth such a Monster.
 Has she not sworn—O yes, ten thousand times!
 Alas I rave, I doat—It must be so:
 For she can execute her Villanies
 Swifter than Thoughts can form.—Stay—here is more.

*“ She brings with her such Poyson, that one Drop only
 “ will lock up your Senses for ever, and close your Eyes in
 “ endless Sleep.——Hypsenor.*

O Woman! Woman! Stain of the Creation!
 Let no Philosopher henceforth perplex
 His Brain, to find the Region of the damn'd,
 For Woman is our Hell——Not all the Plagues,
 Not all the fancy'd Tortures of the Poets
 Combin'd in one, can equal what I feel:——
 Can such a Soul be made in such a Frame?
 Much the compleatest Workmanship of Heav'n;
 Whose Beauty governs with unbounded Sway,
 Her Mind yet tainted with such damned Spots;
 Heav'n shines conspicuous in her outward Form,
 But in her inward, blackest Hell conceal'd:
 Oh most pernicious of Creation's Works!
 Oh that the Gods cou'd find some other way
 To give our lower World the human Race.

Arist. This Creature first by Providence was form'd
 To be the Help-mate and Support of Man;
 Yet turns rebellious to the great design,
 And lays her Snares for her too easy Lord,
 Who in his Bosom nourishes a Snake,
 That to his Heart thrusts her ungrateful Sting:
 Where is the wonder that the human Kind

Shou'd

Shou'd have such Passions moulded in their Frame,
When the poor Wretch is of a Woman born.

Per. O *Aristides*! oh! my weary'd Heart,
Must sink beneath the cumb'rous load of Grief:
Can you, in all your Circumstance of Thought,
Produce me such another Tale of Horror?
I will not stay where human Monsters dwell,
But instant to some neighb'ring Desert fly,
Hid from the Sight of such a Brute as Man.

Enter the Queen, Lycophron, Clarinda, Lycon.

Queen. Where's *Periander*? Where's my dearest Lord?
Oh! now my Eyes have found their sole Delight;
See there! with what a gloomy Look he walks,
A living Monument of human Woe!
His Eyes are steady fix'd upon the Earth,
Unwillingly he lifts 'em from the Ground,
Lest he shou'd blast 'em with the Sight of Man;
Pleas'd will *Melissa* interrupt his Thoughts,
Dart Rays of Comfort o'er his gloomy Soul.

Per. With what a Smile she gilds her artful Face;
Oh those enchanting Looks unman my Purpose!
Be firm, my Soul, and rouse up my Revenge!

Queen. What means that Savage Fury in your Eyes?
What, is *Melissa* then become your Plague?
You start as if you saw a new *Medusa*,
As if one Look cou'd turn you into Stone.

Per. Stand off! nor dare a single Step approach:
The Sight of Woman is more fell than Poison;
A general Ruin seize on all your Sex,
For ev'ry Word, for ev'ry Act of yours,
Are Baits thrown out to catch that Fool call'd Man.

E

Queen.

Queen. And can you then so soon forget this Form?
That what you doated on, — is loathsome now.

Per. Away, away! thou Scandal to thy Sex!
And come not near me, if you value Life.

Queen. Life! can I value Life! when you, for whom
Alone I live, thus banish me for ever:

Yet will I try these fond encircling Arms,
And clasp you round, till you shall throw me from you,
And, if you kill me, on your Bosom die.

Per. Those damn'd dissembling Tears, are lost on me;
Thus take the due Reward of all thy Crimes,
Die then, nor live to blast the wholesome Earth.

[Stabs her.]

Queen. And is it thus my Constancy you pay?
Thus my Fidelity, my Love reward?

As a convincing Proof that I am yours,

Receive my Pardon with my latest Breath. [Dies.]

Clar. O cruel Tyrant! Strike another Blow,

And lay *Clarinda* at her Mistress' Feet,

For can I think this World is worth my Care,

When all that's Good and Great lies breathless there?

[Exit.]

Lycop. Dead! dead! *Melissa*! Art thou dead, my
Mother?

She's gone! search out, ye Gods, the sharpest Torments
To strike this Tyrant.

Per. Ha!

Lycop. This bloody Tyrant.

Per. Know'st thou, rash Boy, on whom thy Curses fall?

Lycop. O yes! too well! and therefore 'tis I curse thee,
Thou worst of Husbands, and thou worst of Fathers.

Per!

Per. I pardon thee, my Son, this sudden Out-rage,
Thy Grief has over-shot it self — But dare not,
I charge thee dare not tempt my Wrath again;
For she was False.

Lycop. Who was?

Per. *Melissa*!

Lycop. False!

Per. The falsest of her Sex! the basest too!
Her Soul was blacker than an *Ethiop's* Dye,
False with the worst of Men, that Villain *Procles*.

Lycop. Therefore she pin'd each Moment of thy
Absence,

Therefore she scorn'd the Tyrant, and his Offers,
Therefore she bore the Hardships of a Dungeon,
And for that Cause she came to share thy Grief.

Per. She came, indeed, with Smiles upon her Face,
But false those Smiles, for Death was in her Thoughts,
She came to murder me.

Lycop. What, did *Melissa*?

Per. *Melissa* did.

Lycop. My Mother?

Per. Yes, thy Mother.

Lycop. And shall I tamely stand and see her Fame
Thus torn, and mangl'd? No, thus I vindicate —

Per. What means thy Sword, thou bold presumptuous
Boy!

Know'st thou the Rev'ence which thou ow'st a
Father?

Lycop. Yes, and the Curses which I owe a Tyrant.

Lyc. Hold, *Lycophron*.

Lycop. No, thus I dare oppose
A Father, Friends, the World, in such a Cause.

Per. Fly hence, I charge thee fly, I feel the Lion
Rouze in my Breast, fly, lest at once it seize thee:
Speak, *Lycon*, for thou know'st; Was she not false?

Lyc. No, *Periander*, not the Gods more just,
Than she was true.

Per. Ha! say'st thou, say'st thou, *Lycon*?

Lyc. Her Virtue thro' each Trial shone more bright.

Per. Speak that again — Speak till thou seest me fall:
For ev'ry Word strikes Daggers to my Heart.

Lyc. Fix'd as a Rock, and as unmov'd she stood,
That dares the Storms, and ev'ry beating Surge,
When with stern Face the Tyrant menac'd Death,
With noble Scorn at each vain Threat she smil'd.

Per. Then I'm a Wretch indeed! — now *Lycophron*,
Strike home, and I will bless thee for the Blow.

Lycop. Thus then — But hold — Oh, you are yet
my Father, *[Throws away his Sword.]*

Nor dare I lift an impious Hand against you;
Justice is Heav'n's, and 'tis to Heav'n I leave you:
I cannot Curse ye, and yet ev'ry Look
Will urge me to the Guilt. Hence then I fly.

Oh *Periander*, at one fatal Blow

You lost a Wife — and Son! Farewel for ever. *[Exit.]*

Per. 'Tis just, I own it, — Gods! 'tis just I suffer,
I bow me to your Wrath. A Wife, — a Son! —
Both gone! 'tis well — and can you hold, my Brain?
Now cou'd I tear these Eyes out from their Seat!
Heart! I cou'd pull thee from thy wretched Mansion:
And this the way. *[They endeavour to disarm him.]*

Ye Traytors, loose your Hold! Off, let me go,
Or by the Gods you die. *[They disarm him.]*

Arist. Harken to all th' Entreaties of a Friend,

Low

Low on my Knees I beg you wou'd forbear:
With Patience calm the Torture of your Soul.

Per. Patience! go bid the Winds in Storms be still;
You might as well stop Light'ning in its Course,
Or make the swelling Sea forget to roar:
I cou'd, without Emotion, sooner view
The great and universal Wreck of Nature,
A calm Spectator of a ruin'd World. [Pauses.

If there be Gods, let all their Light'ning come
To kill a Wretch, to blast this Head accurst:
Do you, great *Jupiter*, in Justice give
The Punishment, which Man perverse denies:
Snatch me, kind Heav'n! this instant to my Fate,
Lest I shou'd breed a Pestilence on Earth,
Lest such a Monster ruin all Mankind.

Arist. Can you let *Procles* triumph in his Crimes!
Awake! awake the Vengeance in your Breast!
Great *Thebes* has sent her Forces to your Aid:
Haste now, and with her Troops let yours be join'd,
And kill the Tyrant on *Melissa's* Tomb.

Per. Reason at length has reassum'd her Throne,
And I will bear this little space of Life:

Some Hours of Sorrow more with Patience lead,
To pour my Vengeance on this Villain's Head:
My Sword, obedient to its Master's Call,
Shall, like the Arm of *Jove*, resistless fall,
For Crimes like his a Punishment too small. }
Oh, wou'd th' Immortal Gods their Ear incline,
One World were little for Revenge like mine,
He, in the next, in endless Pain shou'd lye,
For ever dying, and yet never die.

The End of the Fourth Act.



PERIANDER.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Theban General, Periander, Aristides.

GENERAL.

I Come to execute what *Thebes* commands:
First, I commit this Army to your Care;
'Tis not for *Corinth* that we fight alone;
The Tyrant long his treacherous Schemes
has laid,

To rule all *Greece*, unrival'd, and alone.

Per. We'll take the Traytor *Procles* by Surprise,
And in his height of Glory cast him down;
Thus the stall'd Brute, regardless of his Fate,
Crops at his Ease his palatable Bane,
Riots luxurious in the plenteous Feast,
Nor knows Destruction is so near at hand,
Till with one Stroke the heavy-falling Ax
Concludes at once his fancy'd Scene of Joy.

Gen. We will obey, when e'er you give the Word. [*Ex.*

Per. On one weak Thread my Happiness depends,
That *Lycophron* once more may bless my Eyes;

In

In search of him, my *Aristides*, go;
Restore this Prop of my declining Age,
And give this Blessing to an aged Father:
Small Recompence for all his weight of Woe!

Arist. I will this Instant your Commands perform;
With Pains unweary'd will I seek your Son;
Will try to banish Anger from his Breast,
And give him to your fond extended Arms.

Per. Oh thou chief Cordial to a troubl'd Mind!
So much to Goodness, such as thine, I owe,
That you have left me not the Pow'r to pay.

Arist. Talk not of that, my Lord; my Life with Joy
In *Periander's* Service shall be spent:
If, by my Means, a Pleasure you can taste,
I swear by that great Pow'r that rules the Sky,
It moves a warmer Transport in my Soul,
Than any Happiness of mine can give.

Per. Hearken, kind Gods, but to this only Pray'r!
Give me but Vengeance on the Traytor *Procles*,
And grant these Arms once more may clasp my Son,
Then will I quit this busie Trifle Life;
For now the Glories of a Kingdom fade,
And in my Eye a Crown has lost its Charms;
Since late Experience shews the gawdy Dream
Light, and dissolving as the falling Snow.

Enter Theban General.

Gen. The long-expected Hour is now at hand,
Both Armies are in readiness to march,
They kindle in each other's Breasts a Flame,
And Emulation seems to spur 'em on:
Give but the Word, and you'll with Pleasure see

E 4

That

That not a Sword is idle in the Cause.

Per. Well, my brave Friend, this Moment let us march;
My Heart with Ardour beats, with Vengeance glows.

[*Exit*



SCENE *Changes to the Palace.*

Enter Procles, Hyspenor.

Pro. The Spirit of Rebellion still reigns here,
And seems to aim at me; but they shall find
It is not safe to rouse a Wrath, like mine:
My Sword once drawn, is blind to all Distinction,
Shall turn their *Corinth* to a Field of Blood,
And her proud Walls convert into a Desert.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. All *Corinth* is in Arms, and *Periander*,
Or else some Friend of his, with Fire and Sword,
Opens a Passage to your Palace Walls. [*Exit.*

Hyp. Fatal Security has prov'd our Bane;
It must be *Periander's* self that heads 'em,
Some neighb'ring Pow'rs have lent their friendly Aid.

Pro. Is there a way in all your course of Thought,
Is't possible this Ruin to avoid?
Find out a Method to allay this Storm,
That drives upon us with impetuous Speed.

Hyp. O dire Event! Destruction is at hand!
No human Pow'r can ward th'impending Blow,
That like a rushing Tide bears all before it,
And beats each useless Opposition down.

Pro. I'll try if this good Sword can make its way:
The fading Sun shall with a Lustre set;

And,

And, as I liv'd, I'll bravely dye a King. [Exit.

Hyp. There is one Hope remaining still behind,
One slender Twig that offers to my Aid,
'Tis my last Hold to break the threat'ning Fall,
For I can justly in my Favour plead,
That I from *Procles* his Abode conceal'd:
Or, if I can, to make my Pardon sure,
I'll give the Tyrant to his just Revenge. [Exit.



SCENE *Draws and discovers, Zeno
and Alcander.*

Zen. Oh what a Scene of Woes has *Corinth* known?
A general Horror glares on ev'ry Face;
You see 'em walk the Streets with Heads reclin'd,
Their Hands each Moment lifted to the Gods,
But Heav'n, relentless Heav'n, rejects their Pray'rs;
A Pestilence not half that Havock makes;
A trifling Ill compar'd with what we feel:
A Tyrant's not a Man, but worst of Monsters,
That triumphs o'er a horrid Scene of Blood,
Riots and revels in all human Woes;
Ambition and Content ne'er dwell together;
No, like her Sister Avarice, she craves
For more, and in the midst of Plenty starves.

Alc. Oh what a Spectacle my Eyes beheld!
A miserable Wretch to Slaughter led,
While his Tormentor with a settl'd Face,
On his bare Flesh, a thousand Lashes gave,
And his whole Body seem'd one single Wound;
But with what Joy, what Transport, did I see

The

The suff'ring Wretch bear all with Mind resolv'd!
 With what a Resolution did he speak?
 Whip me with Scorpions, flea these mangl'd Limbs;
 Yet will I tell thee *Procles* to thy Face,
 Thou art a Brute, and not of human Kind.

Zen. Oh, cou'd but *Corinth* give us ten such Men,
 Soon wou'd we pull the Tyrant from his Throne,
 And free our Country from the dreadful Plague.
 Tyrants are plac'd as Comets in the Sky,
 To make us unbelieving Mortals wise;
 Such Prodigies as these are giv'n, to prove
 There is a Deity that rules the World.

Alc. It moves such Indignation in my Breast,
 That far from *Corinth* will I take my Flight,
 No Scene of Horror more shall blast my Eyes,
 But safe from Tyrants in some Desert live,
 Nor with the Thought of Man profane my Breast;
 Secure from all that are of human Race,
 The Beasts, less savage, shall supply his Place;
 In this blest Solitude I'll spend my Days,
 And gently steal from Life, by slow Decays. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Periander, Lycon, &c. *Procles* and *Hypsenor*,
in Chains.

Per. Heav'n form'd thee sure for *Periander's* Scourge,
 The keenest Arrow in the Hand of Death;
 For ev'n your Eyes, like Basilisks, destroy:
 It is not fit that you shou'd draw a Breath,
 That breathes Contagion to this wretched World.

Pro. Oh Fool! that I shou'd suffer thee to live!
 When with a Word, I had pronounc'd thee dead;
 Weak as I was, I stay'd to see thee first

Curse

Curse thy own Hand, that took *Melissa's* Life,
I hop'd to see thee in Despair and Rage,
When thou had'st call'd on Death, and call'd in vain,
Turn thy own Sword against a hated Life.

Per. Sure 'tis some Fiend sent from th' Infernal Shades,
To spread Destruction wheresoe'er he goes,
And with one Look to blast the Works of Nature.

Enter Aristides.

That face of silent Grief speaks more than Words,
That Fate, *Jove's* busy Agent, still pursues me.

Arist. Your Fears too sure presage, for *Lycophron*
Is Dead — the Victim of *Corcyra's* Hate.

Per. My Son dead too. — This is a Wound indeed:
Villain! infernal Villain! 'tis thy doing.

Then Vengeance to thy Work. Dye, Traytor, dye!

Melissa! 'tis *Melissa* gives the Blow,

And *Lycophron* thus sends it to thy Heart. [*Stabs Procles.*

Pro. Know that my Soul remains unconquer'd still.

On me thou may'st thy utmost Malice try;

Thee and thy Gods I equally despise:

Some artful Priests such Deities have form'd,

And easy Mortals thus thro' Craft deceiv'd,

Such pious Frauds as real Truths believ'd.

I scorn to imitate the vulgar Way,

Nor will to Heav'n the least Obedience pay,

Ambition is my Idol, and Extent of Sway;

Since here my great Designs abortive lye,

In a new World I'll now my Fortune try. [*Dies.*

Per. See with what guilt *Hypsenor* hangs his Head;

Not one since the Creation of the Globe,

Has e'er committed half his impious Deeds;

I will invent new Tortures for this Wretch ;
 Give him but Food enough to keep in Life,
 To-morrow let his Portion still be less,
 That Worms may prey on him before he dies,
 And piecemeal he may moulder into Dust.

[Hypsenor *carry'd off.*

'Tis well, ye Gods ! I read your Wrath too plain.
 The Oath I broke, well has your Justice paid ;
 But hold, be dry my Eyes, while for a Moment
 I bravely rouse up all the Man within,
 To do one act of Justice to the World ;
 Then boldly leave it with the Scorn it merits :
 My Son ! this Tear ! and now no more — Farewell.
 Attend *Corinthians* — As your King I've liv'd,
 Your Friend I'll dye. The Gods have broke your Chains,
 They have reveng'd your Injuries on me :
 My Son ! my Wife ! down, down, thou rising Sorrow !
 Officious Grief ! can'st thou not pause a Moment ?
 Resume your Rights, your Liberties resume,
 Your Liberty preserve as Heav'n's best Gift ;
 Replace your Magistrates, your Laws revive,
 And let 'em be Religiously observ'd :
 Let Piety, let Purity of Manners
 Be once again the Character of *Corinth* :
 Be Emulous for Virtue, not for Pow'r,
 Obey with readiness, that Power obey,
 Whose Labour is the Publick Good — for me —

Arist. Live *Periander*, since Affliction's School
 Has taught thee thou'rt a Man ; and that thy Subjects
 Are Men like thee — Thy Pow'r must make 'em happy.
 Live *Periander*, and assume your Crown.

Per. My Crown ! O no ! I see it now too plain ;

A state of Vanity! a golden Woe!
 Leave me, my Friends; may Heav'n protect your State,
 Be Free, be Great, be Happy, and Adore
 The Gods who make you so — The Task is done.

[*Exeunt all but Periander.*

And now for Death — Death! what is that? 'tis Bliss!
 'Tis Ease from Pain; Cessation too from Thought!
 Where is the Fool wou'd venture on this World,
 Were he himself the Master of his Fate?
 Cou'd Man but pry into the gloomy Scene,
 He ne'er wou'd cast one single Thought upon it.
 Now to the destin'd Place of Death I go,
 To rid me of the Follies and the Cares,
 To close at once the Pageant Scene of Life. [*Exit.*



SCENE *Changes to the Sea-Shore.*

Enter Aristides.

Arist. If I offend, yet will he sure forgive
 The fond O'erflowing of officious Love:
 Here must I take my solemn last Farewell;
 For I see plain, that he is fixt to dye,
 Nor can I blame him for it. Who wou'd live
 To be a constant Torment to himself?
 When ev'ry Object, ev'ry Thought must set
 Full in his view the Murder of his Queen;
 To think that she was Innocent, and Virtuous,
 To think, that this fair Flow'r fell by his Hand,
 Untimely fell, is more than Man can bear.
 See where he comes, lost in some dire Design,
 That seems as if 'twere ripe for Execution.

Enter

Enter Periander at a Distance.

Per. What is this Fear of Death? this Shock to Nature?

That makes us shudder thus at Dissolution:
Death's nothing but the wayward Child of Fancy,
A Fantome, that we dress in borrow'd Colours,
A Form, that in our sickly Brain alone
Exists, and terrible to none but Cowards;
With Joy I meet thee as my last Recourse,
Thou only Good! thou certain Cure for Life!

Arist. O *Periander*, my foreboding Soul
Dreads ev'ry Ill from this Excess of Sorrow.

Per. Cast thy Eye round this spacious Globe of Earth,
And tell me if thou know'st a single Wretch,
Whose Griefs are parallel to those I feel:
Yet not like others will I curse the Gods,
Nor dye blaspheming with my latest Breath:
Pride was not made for such a Worm as Man,
Nor Anger for a Wretch that's born of Woman;
Then let each King this useful Lesson know,
That we are more inferior to the Gods,
Than the least Insect when compar'd to Man;
Compar'd to them — the World is but a Grain,
A Drop of Dew, that as it falls, is lost.
Heav'n in a Moment speaks us into Nothing,
Lays us with other Reptiles in the Dust.

Arist. Exert your self, be *Periander* still;
Joy shall again flow in with prosperous Tide,
And Time efface each Sorrow in your Heart.

Per. Years roll'd on Years, can't wear it from my
Thoughts;
This World and I are weary of each other,

And

And quite tir'd out with such a long Acquaintance,
Now I am fixt to cast the Burden off;
If you're my Friend, then leave me to my self;
Thoughts of Importance labour in my Brain,
And, for a while, I wish to be alone.

Arist. I will not disobey this hard Command,
For tho' severe, yet sacred are your Orders;
But let me use the precious Moment well;
Begone ye foolish Forms, ye nice Distinctions!
While as a Friend I fold you in my Arms,
While in full streams the Eye of Sorrow flows,
Tears choak up all my Words — I can no more,
This one Embrace, and now Farewell for ever. [*Exit.*

Per. Now with that Calmness will I lay down Life,
As some poor Wretch, that tortur'd by Disease,
Is glad he's rescu'd from a Bed of Pain,
And not one Groan betrays a Coward Fear,
Tho' on the Brink of a new World he stands,
Ready to launch into Eternity.
See, where my Slaves, Death's Emissaries, wait,
At one blest Stroke to finish all my Pain.
Now to the Shades with Pleasure shall I go,
To seek for Happiness in Worlds below.
With Pray'rs and Eloquence of Tears I'll try
To make *Melissa* cast a pitying Eye:
If for my Crime she will her Pardon give,
Her *Periander* shall no more deceive;
But on indulgent Heav'n his Thanks bestow,
That with full Scenes of Joy crowns ev'ry Woe. [*Exit.*

Enter Zeno, and Alcander.

Alc. See how the Hand of Heav'n has interpos'd!

For

For when the Sword of *Procles* hung in Air,
 Ready to fall on our devoted Heads,
 Justice has turn'd the Edge upon himself,
 And plung'd it in the Bosom of the Tyrant.

Zen. 'Tis said that *Periander* here design'd
 To part at once with Life, and all its Troubles.
 But, *Aristides*, see his Friend is here,
 And seems to bring us something of Importance.

Enter Aristides.

Arist. My worthy Lords! your King is now no more:
 Last Night he gave this Paper to my Care;
 In it a Tale of Horror is enclos'd:
 On his two Slaves he thus his Order lays,
 To take their Station near the Ocean's Shore,
 And the first Man they saw approach that Way,
 To sheath their Daggers in the Wretch's Breast:
 'Twas to this fatal Place he lately came,
 Here fell the Victim of his Servants Swords,
 And in the Sea his Coarse inglorious lies.

Zen. These are thy Spoils, Ambition! these thy
 Triumphs!

Infernal Lust of Pow'r! where-e'er it reigns,

Like furious Storms broke loose, it knows no Bound,
 Rages and roars, and spreads a Waste around,
 Distracts the beauteous Order of the Soul,
 While Reason only can its Rage controul:
 When she breaks forth, like Night it fleets away,
 And leaves behind, a calm unshaded Day.

F I N I S.

EPILOGUE.

By a FRIEND.

Spoken by Mrs. YOUNGER.

T Here stands our Bard, — poor Wretch! in such a
Fright!

Think, Ladies, on the Fears of a First Night.

The Fears! — 'tis well, — but Ladies, You, we know,
Can quickly make those Fears in Pleasure flow:

Tho' for a while he droops, You quickly can
Raise him to Life, and warm him into Man.

As for the Criticks, ——— Those I'll take in hand;
Bless me! — I vow, ——— here seems a frightful Band
Of some, who come to judge, and some for ——— Fun,
Some, who would shew they've Wit, and some, they've none.
Authors, 'who damn because they can't succeed,
Foplings, who censure what they cannot read.
These, while the Work of Envy they perform,
Roar in the Tumult, and enjoy the Storm.

But know, the Author's Champion I appear,
And for ten Nights dare you to meet me here.
Nay, — don't ye, — hideous Creatures! don't ye frown,
I soon shall find a way to take ye down.

And shall — before we part, — shall make you say,
You're satisfy'd, — extreamly ——— with the Play.

Yet, when all's done, this Bard provokes my Spleen,
What! — stab so loving, and so chaste a Queen!
To draw his Dagger! ——— that a Husband's Play!
Husbands should kill us in a different Way.

Kill us with Kindness, — let 'em if they can,
That Way each Woman dares to face her Man.

Our Author's young, then take him to your Care,
The Youth were always Favourites of the Fair.

If you approve, no Critick dares to frown,
But grows polite, and lays Ill-manners down.

The British Fair can never smile in vain,
One Smile from them o'er-pays an Age of Pain.



AN EPILOGUE to *PERIANDER*,

Written by a FRIEND:

Design'd to have been spoken by Mrs. *Buchanan*
in the Character of *Melissa*.

WELL, Sirs, this Scene of Tragick Sorrow's past,
Thank Heav'n, we're all in Statu quo at last;
Corinth to Liberty again restor'd,
And I to Life — to chuse another Lord:
Our Author dext'rously made me away,
Before he brought his Common-wealth in play,
My Eyes had still maintain'd a Regal Sway.
Was it not hard — to make a Queen forego
Her State — This all our City Ladies know.
And then for Procles — why I'd surely had him
If but t'avoid that odious Word — plain Madam;
On Pow'r alone depends a Woman's Fate,
We covet — not the Man — but his Estate;
Besides — the Diff'rence 'twixt a Chamber-reason,
And that impos'd on me — forsooth! a Prison:
A-while at least the Tyrant shou'd have feign'd,
Corinth no more her Freedom then had gain'd,
Nor I — a Martyr — but a Princess reign'd.

But since the perjur'd Periander's Fall
In general Ruin thus involv'd us all,
Let ev'ry gen'rous Fair indulge a Tear,
Well did we suffer — to be pity'd here:
The Liberty these happy Kingdoms boast,
Were fruitless — shou'd Humanity be lost;
Yet tho' the Vanquish'd may Compassion claim,
And 'tis a Debt to Periander's Fame,
Soon will our Pity own a nobler Cause
Of dying Freedom, and expiring Laws;
And let this fav'rite Maxim stand confest,
(May Heav'n deep root it in each Briton's Breast)
That all the Virtues, tho' they meet in one,
Can never for a Tyrant's Name atone.

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